

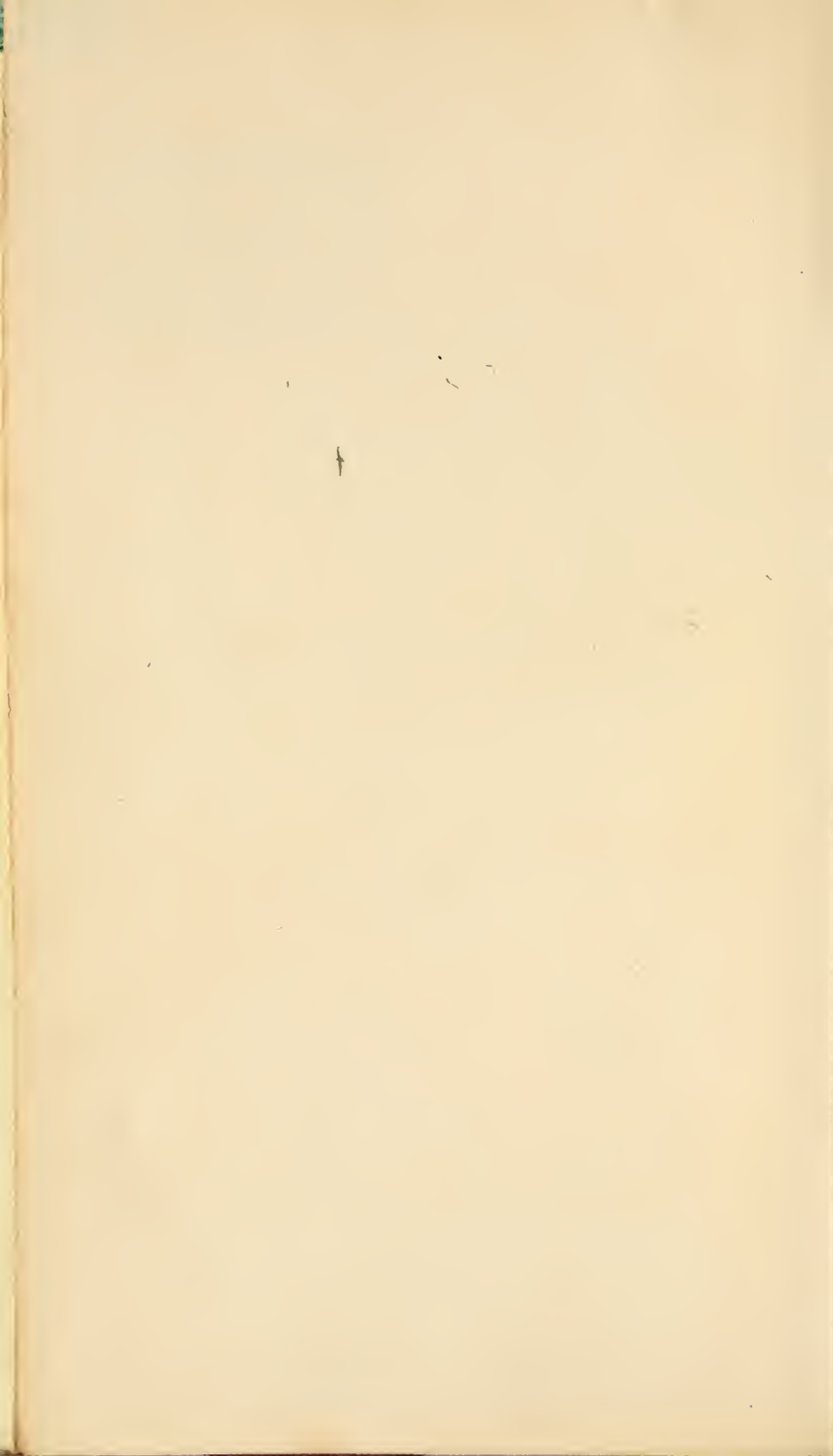




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Ann Owen

The gift of her Aunt

January 1842

Just published in 1822

THE RECTORY of the VILLAGE of P.

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MICHAEL,
THE MARRIED MAN;

OR,

THE SEQUEL TO

THE HISTORY OF

MICHAEL KEMP.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"SHADES OF CHARACTER," "HISTORY OF MICHAEL KEMP,"
&c. &c.

PART - I.

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MICHAEL,

THE MARRIED MAN.

It was about four years after the marriage of Stephen and Fanny, that I called to inquire after my old friends at the Brow. Betty Smith was going on in the quiet performance of the duties of her station, and continually saying, "His goodness and his mercy hath followed me all my days;" and her master was sensible of her worth; still there was a vacuum in his evening hour, and he was often found wandering to the fire-side at the mill, and leaving his ample house to Betty Smith and his other servants. In the summer he saw his family, but, as the winter drew on, there was a loneliness about his dwelling, and he found the visits of his little nephew a most delightful solace. The reader is well acquainted with Fanny's devoted attachment to her brother, and will not be displeased to hear that this attachment increased as her own views opened, and the warm-hearted young crea-

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ture, when Mr. Lascelles said, "Name this child," had forgotten that it was not the mother's place, and exclaimed, "O! *Michael*, Sir." The good man caught the mother's meaning, and the prayer of the parent and the pastor ascended together to the throne of grace. The little creature won daily on his uncle's affections; first, baby softness, and tenderness mixed with a sort of dependance; then the opening of his intelligence, and the endearment of infancy, and as soon as he could walk he was found clinging to his uncle's side, and lingering to go home with him.

It was shortly after his third birth-day, when a younger infant, a little sister, occupied the attention of his mother, that he was missing, to their great alarm. Michael called in as usual, and finding Fanny in deep distress, (for she greatly feared the mill-stream,) he intreated her to compose herself, and returned home, convinced in his own mind that he should find the little wanderer at the Brow, and so indeed he did. Betty Smith met him at the door, "Dear me, Sir, if that bit of a baby b'aint come all alone," and as he entered the room, after sending Betty down to let Fanny know the child was safe, he found him sitting very quietly on his little stool, taking the stones out of his shoes. "Come,

uncle," said the little truant, "sit down by Michael." After taking him on his knee, and stroking his head fondly, his uncle looked gravely at him; "You have made your mother cry, Michael, she had lost you, my boy,"—"go home," said the child, and he slipped from his uncle's knee and put his little hat upon his head; "you *shall* go home," and he took him in his arms and carried him to the mill. I need not tell the greeting; mothers can easily conceive it, and those who are not mothers may dispense with it. "We must contrive some means," said Michael, "to stop this runaway." "I am afraid that will not be easily done," said Fanny, "for he is too young to feel the sin of breaking his word, we must watch him carefully," added she. It was long after this event, that Fanny continued to say, when he went to the door, "Not to the Brow, my love, not to uncle Kemp's." "O no, no, no," was the constant reply.

In the circle of human pleasures, perhaps none are so pure and delightful as those of which infancy forms a part. Life is new, and the untried traveller has neither learnt to imitate the language of others, nor to court their approbation; all is original, all is natural and various; we are too apt to injure this by giving patterns and ex-

amples, whereas, if we were to leave the character to develop, only weeding out sin, and curbing excess, we should at least secure more simplicity.

It may be observed that there are characters who continue originals. This is true, but it will be found that some defect in their character keeps them so, a will which cannot be subjugated, or a self-satisfaction which is proof against remonstrance——But I am wandering. Forgive me, reader——As Michael walked back to the Brow, he met a little creature not more than seven years old, with a large bundle of wood upon his head going towards home. “Your name is Thomas Brown?” “Yes, Sir.” “You have been to my hedge, and your father desired you to say that you gathered the wood from the ground.” The boy looked astonished.—“There now, put down that wood, it is not yours, it is mine! and tell your father I wish to speak with him.” He carried home the bundle of wood, and was met by Betty in the passage. “Dear me, Sir, I’m sure you are very good, but Leonard has brought me in my sticks.” “*I* did not gather these sticks, Betty; look ye here, this is green wood.” Betty looking at it, “Dear me, yes, and if here baint some young quick too; why where could

ye get *this*, Sir?" "I met Thomas Brown carrying it home." "What, Sir! *that* child?" "Yes, Betty." "I can't see, Sir, how he could gather them, the prickles be so sharp." "Why, Betty, you see his father works near some of my fields, and half his time is employed in gathering wood and putting it in a particular corner till the night, and then the boy is sent out as if he went to gather sticks; when, in fact, he is only sent to pick up what the father has been cutting." "That is a bad plan, Sir, that do train them for the gallows." "Yes, Betty, and it is less excusable in this parish, because so much care is taken to provide all that is necessary." "To be sure, Sir, there is; it has often been a wonderment to me, the thought and the care that Mr. Lascelles do take, and yet he do never seem satisfied with himself." "No, he grows in humility, and I have no doubt he has such increasing views of man's depravity, and the perfection of Jesus, that after the saying of a good man, he feels poorer! all our righteousness, and all our riches, must be in *Him*. It is a good thing, Betty, not only for ourselves, but for those with whom we stand connected, when experience shows us our just proportion. I know not well what I shall do with this man when

he comes.” (*Betty*) “ You must frighten him a little, Sir; I should pick out the young quick, in particular.”

Brown came up, and taking off his hat, “ I heard, Sir, as you had a wish to speak wi’ me.” “ Step in Brown; it is two months since I planted an entire new quick hedge on the western side of the field that joins your master’s, and you see what lies on this table. I wish to ask you, Brown, if this is doing as you would be done by? If I were to dig up your potatoes and boil them for my dinner”——“ Aye, Sir, you’ll never do *that*, I’m sure—you are too good for that; besides, Sir, you don’t want potatoes, and *I do* want wood—the wages are so low, and we have had a deal of sickness.” “ If wages are low, Brown, bread is low, and as for your sickness, that is always provided for in this parish—you have generally physic and food during the whole time, and a very fair allowance.” “ To be sure, Sir, good night, Sir.” “ No, Brown, not so fast, I must have some promise from you not to be so bad a neighbour in future.” (*Brown*) “ Dear Sir, how can you tell as *I* took it out of your hedge?” “ I leave *that* with your own conscience, Brown; from whatever hedge it was taken, you have done very wrong, and it will be easy for me to de-

tect you directly by a walk to my field; it is unpardonable in this parish, and shows an innate love of mischief. I hope you feel that it is wrong, you may depend upon it I shall not pass by another offence of this kind." Brown was glad to escape, and Betty said, "Dear me, Sir, you should have given him a good rally, he won't mind that at all. Did you hear as the shopkeepers were selling off at prime cost?" "Are they going to quit then?" "Why, sir, they've had a fortune left 'em; a kind of a miserly uncle as hav'nt allowed himself bread and cheese, used often to come and dine there, and to have the best as the shop did afford, and he was so perticler pleased with the kind entertainment as they did give him, that he have left 'em every thing that he had, and they do say as neighbour Shouldam will ride in his carriage." "And do you think, Betty, he will be happier than he is now?" "Oh, dear no, Sir, I'm sure Jenny Shouldam will miss the gossip sadly."

Joseph Kemp, who continued the same character, was not confided in by his brother, who clearly saw that he was one of those persons who must always be directed. He was grieved at this, for he would gladly have provided for Joe, but he was in perpetual danger of making some foolish mis-

take. In our former visits to the neighbourhood of the Brow Farm, it may be remembered that there was a family who were very anxious to become acquainted with Michael, and to form some lasting connexion, this had only slept. It was about this time that Michael was honoured with a visit from the brother of Miss Jennings. Michael was writing when he walked into the house, and said, he should be glad to speak with him. Betty did not think that Mr. Jennings could have any thing of consequence to say to her master, so she continued stirring her starch, without attempting to quit the apartment. "I should be glad to speak with you *alone*, Sir," said Mr. Jennings; and they walked together to the small back parlour. "I called, Sir, to ask what you meant to do for Mr. Joseph?" "For Joseph!" "There is a kindness between him and my sister, and I thought perhaps you would give up part of the farm to him." "No, indeed, Mr. Jennings, I have no such design; my brother is likely to be a working man all his life, and the sooner your sister knows this, the better; and I think, Mr. Jennings, if you wish well to your sister, you should forbid the visits of Joseph Kemp." Mr. Jennings was surprised, he thought it was

a very good joint for Mr. Joseph, and he wondered his brother could not see it. He withdrew, astonished at Mr. Kemp's coolness and decision.

Michael thought he would send Joe home again for a short season, that he might forget the lady, and that she might recover her liberty, and bestow her hand more suitably. But the mother was not to be so baffled; she called on Mr. Michael, and said, "She was quite sorry to find Mr. Joseph was not likely to go into business, and that it was an old attachment, that she thought it would go hard with her daughter, and that she feared her good man would never consent that her Louisa should marry a working man." Michael Kemp surprised Mrs. Jennings by the following reply, "I think, Ma'am, Mr. Jennings is perfectly in the right, my brother Joseph is a working boy, his father is a weekly labourer at a nursery garden. I consider myself as Mrs. Finch's steward; if I succeed in business, I may perhaps have the great consolation of assisting my parents, when they can no longer provide for themselves; I have several brothers and sisters who have quite as just claims on me as Joseph; but even of these I shall not think, till by industry and frugality I may be able to provide for

my father and mother." "Well, Mr. Kemp, I must needs say you are losing a good chance; I can't tell if you know my Louisa, she has had the best of educations, and would have made your brother as genteel a wife, as any man would desire to look upon. And she is so religious too, I think within the last twelvemonth she have giv'd away more money than ever I did in all my life, and yet you see she is quite elegant." Michael said, "he had not the honour of knowing Miss Jennings." "What, Mr. Kemp, did you never see my Louisa at church!?" "I have no doubt, Madam, that I may have seen Miss Jennings, but I believe you have more daughters than one." "Oh yes, certainly, there's my Amelia Jane, and Eleanora Frances, and there's Antoinette, as we christened after the Queen of France; I often say I hope the poor girl will never be guillotined." Michael gravely replied, "he hoped not." "Talking of that guillotine, Sir, I have heard it as a remarkable quick death, do you know whether that's true, Sir?" "No, really Madam, but I should suppose the report is likely to be so." Mrs. Jennings was delighted at drawing Mr. Kemp into conversation even on the guillotine; and so she continued facetiously, "By what I could see on't, for a

man once came to our house with a pattern, and says I to my husband, my little Tiny shall see, (for that's what we call Antoinette,) my little Tiny shall see how her namesake had her head cut off. So I puts my hand in my pocket, and I gives the man twopence, and I called all my children about me, and my Harry, you know him, Sir, (*Michael bowed,*) he's as 'cute a lad as ye shall see in a summer's day: why, says he, mother, why its just for all the world like a mouse trap! and when I came to look on it again, why, says I, boy, so it is! and his father said, let our Harry alone, he will do in the world."

Poor Michael's patience was almost exhausted, Mrs. Jennings began to perceive it, but she was not willing to end the matter quite so quickly, so she said, "I hope your mother is quite well, Sir." "I hope she is, Madam; I have not heard for some time past———" "A very handsome woman, Mrs. Kemp, I said to my husband, when I saw her at church, says I, John, that Mrs. Kemp must have been a beauty in her young days! but as I was saying, Mr. Kemp, perhaps if you was to call now and then at our house and take a friendly cup of tea, and smoke a pipe with my husband, and Mr. Joseph was to come in you know, my husband

may get used to him ; now that's a mighty particular thing in him, I forgot to tell you that he takes a strange fancy to a thing when he's used to it, so as I was a saying ——” Michael now determined to cut short this harangue, “ I should think myself, Madam, unworthy the confidence of any person, if I were capable of endeavouring, by artifice, to persuade them to that, which, in my own judgment, I thought unsuitable ; my brother, Madam, has no right to expect any woman for his wife above the rank of an honest, decent maid servant ——” “ Oh dear, Mr. Kemp, you are so humble !” Michael shook his head : “ I hope, Madam, your daughters will be better provided for, and that I shall never forfeit my title to that honesty which gained me the good opinion of my late master. There are so many persons in this parish who remember me a poor stable boy, that I am sure it would be thought a sad disgrace for your daughter, Mrs. Jennings, to throw away her fine education on my brother ——” “ Well, I'm sorry for the young folks, however,” said this persevering mother. At this moment in came Joseph, and when he saw Mrs. J. he looked more silly than usual, hoped she was well, and all the family was well. Quite well, and she thanked him. “ And

won't you have nothing to take?" said Joseph. "Why, I shouldn't mind if I did have a little fresh beer, or a drop of ginger wine." "I can offer you a little elder wine," said Michael, "but we have no ginger." "Ah, that's what I often say, there's none in this country as knows how to make ginger wine but *me*, and *you* know its very good, Mr. Joseph." "I never tasted any thing pleasanter; I should think, brother, as Betty Smith could make some." "I should be quite happy to show Betty how to make it, Mr. Kemp, and my Louisa shall write out the receipt, Mr. Joseph." Mr. Joseph smiled, but Michael was so absolutely disgusted with this incorrect mother, that he remained obstinately silent, until impenetrable as she *was*, she began to feel her departure as the most proper step. Joseph, making an excuse from the steepness of the road, insisted on giving her his arm down the hill. Michael coldly bade her good morning, and when Joseph returned, said, "I fear you have acted imprudently."

In thus repelling the hopes of Mrs. Jennings, Michael had only put back, what he would never have encouraged under any circumstances. To see Joseph settled in the midst of a weak and worldly family, would, he knew, be certain ruin. To give *him* a genteel wife, whose head was already full of *ideas* far beyond

his station, would have been confirming all his foolish notions, and then to place him among those, who were without God in the world, him whose hopes were already so bounded, was in Michael's opinion, putting him out of the way. He was hesitating what he should say next, when Joseph began, for Joe had not replied to his last speech, "Brother, brother, I hope you have no objections to Miss Jennings, they have all been so kind to me, I'm sure I never *could* have thought as Miss Jennings had such a regard for me: she told me the last Friday as ever was, that she would rather live with me in a cottage, than have a lord: but I hope, brother, you won't mention it." "No indeed, Joseph, I should not mention any thing so silly; I do not think Miss Jennings knows what it is to live in a cottage with a day labourer." Joseph looked hurt and disappointed:—Michael did not wish to wound him, but he was desirous to put him in his right place, and he added these few words, "It seems, Joseph, that Miss J. is a forward young lady, her brother is a good-natured, silly young man, and her mother so foolishly indulgent as to act in opposition to her husband's will and wishes." Joseph was going on, "Indeed, brother, I don't know as Mr. Jennings is an enemy of mine." "I never supposed he was, Joseph.

I think he appears to be a man who would not wish his daughter to leave home without the prospect of a maintenance." Joseph began at length to comprehend that his brother had no idea of taking him into partnership, and he walked sullenly away.

Betty Smith saw that her master was grieved about something, and she had a method of looking at him with sympathy, without uttering a word; but that look had so much of feeling, that it often drew Michael into confidence and disclosure. When Michael mentioned the occasion of these visits from the Jennings', she shook her head, "Ah, Sir, they make a great show, but there's more cry than wool. I have heard from them as knows, that young Mr. J. will spend a pound note at the public houses most market days, and that old Mr. Jennings have spent a deal of foolish money on that new house. Do you know, Sir, as those Miss Jennings's have got a morning room, and they come in, in their morning dresses, and have got little stools to put their feet on, and a neighbour told me, it was quite a beautiful sight to see the four Miss Jennings's in that apartment: they have pink curtains tied up in knots of ribbon, and all their grand-mamma's china to imitate Mrs. Lascelles." "Oh, Betty, it is very foolish," said Mi-

chael, for he had not patience to listen to it." "No, Sir, they've got an eye to Mr. Joseph coming in half partner with you, and I heard it said, I don't know how true it is, that they thought to make quite a pretty thing of the Brow." The patience of Michael was now quite exhausted, and he said, "I really think the best thing I can do will be to send Joe home." "I think so, Sir," said Betty, "for that Richard Moss have done Mr. Joseph no good." Michael retired to his apartment, and poured out his heart in prayer before God, for counsel and direction. It was there he renewed his strength for his journey.

It is worthy the observation of any person, who desires to profit by the providences of God, to note the small links in the great chain. Michael had settled in his own mind that Joseph should return to P——, but he had many reasons which deterred him from doing any thing rashly: he did not wish to hurt Joe's feelings, and still less did he wish to disappoint the hopes of his dear father and mother; and how to return this unpromising young man was the difficulty. It was not that Michael was unwilling to bear with him, but he really feared, that surrounded as he appeared to be by temptation, he would fall into some gross imprudence, and bring his

parents' grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. He remained in this uneasy state the whole of the following day, watching this overgrown child; at last he determined to go and consult Fanny. Stephen met him at the door of his little dwelling, and seeing that more than usual care hung on his brow, asked if he were well? "Quite well, but I want to chat with Fanny," and he related all that had passed. "Oh," said Fanny, "this is no news to us, last night, Joe the Miller, when he came in to settle the account, said, there's rare news in the village, Ma'am, there's to be a grand wedding soon, not that 'twas much news to me, for I have seen it coming on many a day. I wondered at the man's talkativeness, and was just going to say, we had nothing to do with it, when Stephen said, why what's all this to us, Joseph? Joseph said, it *was* to us, it was in our family, that both my brothers were going to be married to two of the Miss Jennings's, that Joe was to have Miss Louisa, and that Master chose the youngest and the prettiest, Miss Antinetty."

Michael could not help smiling, and Fanny, who stood by him, patted his shoulder, and said, "my steady brother and Miss Antoinette!" "Come, Sir," said Stephen, "do sit down: can I do any thing?" Michael

sighed heavily, "I am sure I do not know what to do, these foolish people seem to court their own ruin." Stephen said, "he understood that Joe was learning to play the flute, and that they looked on him as very clever at Sizors." "Oh, dear me," said Michael, and Fanny laughed. At this moment Joe came in, bringing a letter from P——. "Come, sit down, sit down all of you," said Fanny, "and let us hear it." There was a great rattling at the door, "Dear Joe, do open the door, that's my wild boy," and the moment the door was opened, he darted across to Michael, and the eye of his fond relation looked down on him with love. The letter was as follows:

"Dear Children,

"Blessing and peace rest upon you. You must have thought it long since you heard from us: thank God we are all well, and we are wanting news of you. I should not have written to you just now, but at the desire of our master. You know how fond he is of your father; he is very desirous to do us any good, and he wants a hand in the conservatory that should be just under your father, and he says he thinks no one would do for the place as well as Joe. Now remember, my dear

Michael, I should be exceedingly sorry to hinder you in your business, but a nurseryman's is such a good trade; and I thought if our poor dear Joe could get to be promoted, if he would like to come and could conduct himself steadily. (Every eye was bent on Joe while this passage was reading, but he stood staring out of the window, thinking of Miss Jennings.) Much allowance was to be made for his weak mind. He had lost, as he thought, promotion, all his hopes seemed to be disappointed. He and Miss Jennings had planned to live very comfortably at the Brow. They did not mean to displace Mr. Michael—oh no! they thought they should add to his comfort. It must be very dull for him with that Betty Smith, and then Mrs. Jennings thought when once Miss Louisa was settled, and Mr. Michael began to know the family, her little Tiny would be sure to make her way.

Thus do worldly people plan, and God sometimes permits their plans to take effect, and they commend themselves for their own ingenuity, till they discover that the happiness they sought, is not happiness; and their disappointed expectations are never traced to their true source, and oh, how often do we find such persons

charging God foolishly, whereas they are eating the fruit of their own way, and tasting that bitterness which unblessed schemes are sure to entail on artful, worldly minded persons. But here in a case of this sort, where the children of God would have been involved in the same ruin, He who ordereth the steps of the good man, He who keepeth his children as the apple of his eye, He who sitteth in the heavens, laughed them to scorn, and his mercy, not only for eternity but for time, followeth his people from generation to generation. Reader, pardon this digression.

The remainder of Mrs. Kemp's letter contained only local intelligence which would interest none who are unacquainted with P——. Joe would have given something to have heard the remainder, for he concluded that it contained some censure of his conduct, and some doubt of his prudence. Had Michael thought this, not a word would have been kept from him, but he put it in his pocket, and his head was full of contrivances for Joe's return to P——, and his heart swelled with gratitude to God who had made his way plain. As they walked back to the farm together, Michael observed, "I think this opening quite pro-

vidential, Joseph." Joseph made no reply. "I think," said he, in continuation, "this opening is quite the thing for you." "Do you, brother?" said Joe, "poor Miss Jennings have got such a regard for me, that I'm afraid she won't like it." "*That* is very probable," said Michael, "but her father will be very well satisfied, that she should escape poverty; for I do not think, Joseph, that you are capable of maintaining a wife at present; you have not sufficient industry. But there is no doubt, by application to your business, you may do something." This was holding out a rational hope, and though Michael thought the connexion by no means desirable, he left this impression on Joseph's mind, that industry in his business might promote his wishes. He however knew enough of the human heart, to feel sure Mrs. Jennings and her daughter would not permit the matter to drop so very quietly, and he greatly feared correspondence, and some foolish result: he therefore determined to call on old Mr. Jennings, and request half an hour's conversation.

There was a favourite walk in the Brow Farm Garden which Michael always took when his heart was oppressed; it was skirted by a double row of filbert trees, and here did he walk and pray for direc-

tion. One point of this young man's fear was, that he might act in his own spirit, while outwardly he appeared to be seeking the good of others. Oh, how did he daily discover the windings and intricacies of his own bosom, and how frequently would he feel the truth of that scripture ; " The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," and this too, at the very moment when he was admired and looked up to by those who knew him most intimately ; and in this sense the approbation of his fellow-creatures was really distressing to him. Thus it will ever be with the renewed mind ; the clearer the view of heavenly purity and holiness is displayed in Jesus, the deeper will be the abhorrence of the slightest pollution. In his nut walk Michael prayed, that through the whole of this business he might walk by the light of divine counsel. After this, he went out to visit some of the poor who were sick in his neighbourhood, and he suffered the affair to cool two or three days. In the mean time Joseph was getting ready, and his changing mind was finding advantages in his home residence : they certainly were not consolations of a superior kind, but as they were consolations to Joe, and reconciled him in some degree for the loss of his visits to Sizors,

we will just mention it, that the reader may know the full worth of Joe's tender attachment. He thought, 'Well now, I'm to be a sort of head man, I shall put down my name to the Bowling Green, and if my father makes any objections, I shall say to him just as Mr. H. Jennings says to his father, "Sir, the thing is done." Oh, I remember seeing Mr. Jennings rub his hands and clap them when he said that! and the old man had not a word to say for himself.'

It may be remembered, that there was a good old Christian of the name of Beal, who was truly an honour to religion. Meekness and resignation had marked her progress through life. The death of her husband had been a trial which put her firmest principles to a severe test, but he whom she had trusted, was faithful; and she counted it worthy of all honour that she was called to resign, though it was resigning ALL; and she did it in that spirit of meekness, which calls forth the feelings of every one capable of appreciating the beauties of a renewed mind. But Mr. Lascelles, in his frequent visits to her, felt such an increasing regard, and saw so clearly the influence of absolute seclusion at her time of life, when age wants the care of childhood, that he

determined to find some person to attend her: but this was more easily proposed than accomplished, and when Margaret heard of it, she shook her head, and replied, "I'm sure, Sir, you are very kind and good, I'm perfectly sensible of that, but I'm really afraid as it would be a difficult matter to suit me. I have always been used to live so very clean, and my poor husband was such delightful company, that it is no easy matter to fill up his place. I have a sister who is in great weakness, she has a daughter coming seventeen in August, who has never been out. While her father was alive they wanted for nothing, but he died last year of the scarlet fever: how they have maintained themselves since I can't say. My niece is a good girl, and I should be very glad to have her here, but you know, Sir, this is not a place in which she could earn much, she has been bred to the mantua making, and I should be sorry to bring her here to her hurt." "Well, you can only ask her, and if you find she makes any hesitation, leave it." This conversation had passed between Margaret and Mr. Lascelles some months since, and he saw in the same pew on Easter Sunday a very decent looking woman sitting by Margaret, and a young girl, apparently the age of her niece, and

he thought to himself, I do hope the poor old woman has succeeded. Such was the case, Mary Humphries and her daughter were indeed arrived, and on the following morning, when Mr. Lascelles called to see Margaret, he found them sitting at their work-table, in all the enjoyment of decent life. Esther Humphries had obtained a little work, and was performing with her accustomed neatness, the orders with which some neighbours had favoured her. Mr. Lascelles was very much pleased with the conversation of the mother, and the silent industry of the daughter.

There is no situation, however humble, that entirely excludes enjoyment; the pursuit of the silent duties of life, when those duties are under the Divine blessing, brings pleasure and satisfaction in the performance. We must be careful not to attribute the thorny path, exclusively to God, but remember; "The transgressors make paths for themselves, and walk in the light of their own guilt, and sin usually makes this a painful path; whereas the path of the righteous is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The husband had been coachman in a great family, and Esther was his only child; she used to linger about the coach-house and stables, while

the fond father would listen to her entreaties, and let her ride with him on the coach-box, till he drew near the door of the mansion: when some of the good-natured servants would carefully place the little Esther on firm ground. This indulgence had been granted so often, that it was at last noticed by the young ladies of the family, and when Esther, who was in her sixth year, after one of her rides was returning to her mother, she was met by the youngest daughter, who putting her hand on the infant's head, said, "Well, little one, have you had a ride?" Esther's pleading face was covered with blushes, as she replied, "Yes, Ma'am." She was that sort of child, whom we sometimes see, without any pretensions to beauty, yet with such a stamp of artlessness, and all the innocence of infancy so fresh upon her, that she made her way immediately, and the whole conversation during the morning ride turned upon Esther, and her fond father: it was settled among themselves, that if her parents would consent, she should form one of a little school newly established, where she would not only learn to read, work, and write, but be trained for future life, according to the natural inclination of her mind. Esther had a most useful active

mother, who had recommended herself by kindness in nursing, and performing other offices for her neighbours; the mistress of the school had among others shared her friendly attentions. Now though we are not about to prove, that gratitude is a prevailing principle; yet we have observed, that those who water shall be watered again, and these attentions on the part of Mary Humphries, had prepared the schoolmistress to take peculiar interest in the improvement of her daughter. The continuance of the child at school, during a series of years, had so completed her education as a work woman, that she executed every thing she undertook with uncommon neatness and ability. Never was a doll dressed so prettily as Esther's, every little slip was turned to some use by the assistance of her needle, and so well done, that it at length attracted the attention of her young mistresses, and it was settled that she should be apprenticed to a mantua-maker: not indeed one of the fashionables, but a neat orderly woman in the neighbourhood, whom they were accustomed to employ. She acquired from this instructress the art of fitting her young ladies, and was continually employed by them till circumstances removed them;

and this happened about the time Margaret Beal sent for her sister.

Before Joseph's departure for his father's dwelling, Michael determined to call on Mr. Jennings, and as he drew near Sizors, Miss Jennings perceived him; she was walking under the shade of her parasol, round a neat little garden in front of the house, in her small lace cap, and certainly had she appeared suitably to the station assigned her by providence, we must have owned she was a fine looking young woman. As it was, we could not help being sorry that the father and the mother laboured early and late to provide for the idleness and vanity of their numerous family. At Mrs. Finch's, Jeruima's eye was on every part of the establishment; but *here*, to have known the price of butter, or how many cheeses were made in a week, would have been deemed a vulgarity to which they could not stoop.

Michael bowed very coolly as he passed the young lady, and inquired of a dirty, slavish servant, if her master was at home? The girl said, "Yes," and Miss Jennings turning her steps towards the house, was about to lead him to her father. He however declined this favour, and said he would wait, as his business was private. The

farmer soon came out: he was a rough, honest, good looking man, of a very firm temper, not clever, though he understood his business, and applied to it closely. He thought his wife greatly mistaken in her mode of bringing up her daughters, yet was always silenced by, "Leave the girls to me, Mr. Jennings, you mind your boys." So it was, "Well, well," and a shrug, and the matter was settled.

Michael introduced his business with proposing a walk, that they might converse privately, Mr. Jennings secretly rejoicing in the hope of a respectable establishment for one of his daughters, readily accompanied him, and with the cheerfulness of a man who anticipates nothing but pleasure, began to joke with him on the times, how that they farmers should soon ride in their carriages. Michael smiled, and said, "the times had been good, and no doubt many of them had made fortunes, that it bore hardest on young beginners: my business, Sir," said he, "is to inform you, that I understand my thoughtless brother, Joseph, has been endeavouring to recommend himself in your family, not considering the distinction that is to be made between the daughters of a substantial farmer, and the son of a labouring man: and I think it right, Sir,

to put you on your guard, by informing you that Joseph Kemp has literally nothing but day labour to depend on. For myself, Sir, I live honestly, but by the time I have paid Mrs. Finch's annuity, provided for Richard Moss, and assisted my own family at home, I have really nothing to spare for Joseph."

Curiosity was a very active principle in the mind of Mr. Jennings. By some means he had seen Farmer Moss's will, but never perceived any thing of an annuity for Mrs. Finch; and he thought this speech of Mr. Kemp's was nothing more than a flourish; for he could not conceive it possible that any one should act as Michael had really acted: but he determined this should not pass. "Annuity, Mr. Kemp! annuity! I never saw any thing of that sort in Farmer Moss's will!" "No, Sir," said Michael, "it was an omission, which, had I known the contents of the will before my master's death, I should certainly have urged him to supply; but, as it is, the affair is arranged, and I have the happiness of convincing Mrs. Finch of my duty, and unwillingness to injure her." "Why, Mr. Kemp, do you pay Mrs. Finch an annuity of your own good will in these hard times? A young man like you just beginning the

world! Now, begging your pardon, I think this a very foolish business. Why, Mrs. Finch, is, as you may say, a rich woman; and her son and daughter are provided for." Michael made no reply to this part of Mr. Jennings's speech, but continued to say, "he thought it probable Joseph would write to Miss Jennings," and he delivered his conscience in warning him against a connexion which would be every way disadvantageous. He concluded by saying, "that Joseph was a good-natured lad, but had no head for business, and that if raised in life to conduct a farm, he would infallibly involve himself from want of ability." He wished Mr. Jennings a good morning, and was going, when the good man continued, "One word with you, Mr. Kemp, if you will give your brother £100, I will give him £400 with my daughter." "Really, Sir, it is not in my power to do this, and I tell you sincerely, that I believe my brother totally incapable of managing money, and that were Miss Jennings a sister of mine, I should close my doors against Joseph Kemp." "Very extraordinary, very extraordinary!" said Mr. Jennings, "you seem quite your brother's enemy." "No, indeed, Sir, but far be it from me in order to promote my family to involve yours."

“And so, Mr. Kemp, you really *do* pay Mrs. Finch an annuity?” “I really *do*, Sir. If you have any doubts on the subject, I am certain Mrs. Finch would satisfy you. Good morning, Sir.” Mr. Jennings walked in. Very uncommon man that, uncommon honest, ’twould be a fool’s head business indeed to marry my girl to a labourer: well, now I think on’t, I always thought *that* Joseph Kemp a silly looking fellow. I said to my girl only Tuesday last, as he seemed to hold the flute uncommon stupid. No, says I, Louisa, he will never be up to that; but the girl has taken a strange fancy to him. A labourer! no, that would be a story to tell, Miss Louisa Jennings to Joseph Kemp labourer!

Thus Mr. Jennings was reconciled, as many people in life are reconciled. The event *could* not take place, and he began to perceive that it was best it *should* not. Just as Mr. Kemp quitted Sizors, Miss Antoinette returned from a walk, but she could make nothing of this meeting. Michael was too full of the business he had been upon, and if he saw her, he did not distinguish which of the ladies it was. She came home, primed with intelligence of a new shop in the village, or rather a new mantua-maker, and the whole store of her wit was employed in

ridiculing Miss Esther Humphries. "We shall never be at a loss for fashions," said this flippant young lady, "though I'm afraid they will be rather of the quaker kind." "Dear me," said Louisa, "how I should like to go and see her. I could take her an old gown to make; I should rejoice in puzzling her imagination by inquiries after the latest fashions." So these very amiable young ladies sallied out together.

Esther had procured a small board, signifying her name and employment. It was neatly done, and placed just over the window of her aunt's cottage. "Well, Margaret Beal," said Miss Jennings, "we are honoured indeed, your house will become the resort of all the fashionable people." And this young lady entered the door in a spirit of ridicule, but the power of good manners and good sense is irresistible. Esther rose to get them seats, and begged to be informed what they would wish to have. These voluble young ladies began to look doubtfully on each other. At last Miss Jennings requested she might see some of the newest millinery. "Ladies," said Esther, with becoming modesty, "I only make gowns to your own patterns. I could show you some things belonging to another person,

when they are finished." "Pray how long have you been established here, Miss Humphries?" "Only three weeks, Ma'am." "I should fear you would find business a poor thing here." "Indeed, Ma'am, I have had as much as I could do ever since I arrived. Mrs. Lascelles is very kind, and I have been working for Mrs. Meredith at the mill." Miss Jennings bit her lips to avoid a smile, and she pronounced the word "Indeed" with a very firm tone.

Things were in this quiet state when Margaret Beal came in; she had been weeding her garden, and bade the young ladies a cordial good morning, hoped their mother was well, said it was fine weather for the harvest, and inquired after farming business, of which they confessed themselves completely ignorant. Margaret, whose simplicity took the short road to mortification, while she really had no intention to mortify them, as they professed ignorance of one thing, and ignorance of another, said, "Now that's a pity!" She had repeated this several times, when Miss Jennings asked her, "What was a pity?" "Why, my dear, that you should know nothing. I wonder your mother don't teach you! It will be strangely awkward for you, please God, you should ever have a house of your own, and married to some

working man." Miss Jennings could scarcely contain her displeasure, but Margaret did not see it. "She is a kind mother, dears, she was always a bustling body, but its time now for you to guide the house, and for her to sit down, and consider her latter end. Let's see how many are there of ye?" And she began to enumerate. "That's a fine saying of the psalmist, 'Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children.' That is, ye see dears, the giant sends one arrow to one place, and another to another, all designed for various purposes: so, my dear girls, you may all do different things; one might sweep the house, another might make the butter, and if any of you have a hand at your needle, you could make and mend your father's shirts." This was hardly to be borne, and they were anxious to end it, when Esther asked, "if they had any commands for *her*?" They said "No, that unless they could *see* some patterns, it was impossible to fix." Esther curtsied, and the ladies withdrew.

They had scarcely left the garden before they met Mr. Lascelles, with his youngest little girl hanging on his arm. "So, Miss Jennings, you have been to see

that good creature, Margaret Beal?" The condescensions of Mr. Lascelles were never quite understood by Miss J. She always felt a disposition to rise when this excellent man descended; but he was a person of very keen susceptibility, and understood every motion of every mind. Miss Jennings said, "No, Sir, we have been to her niece the mantua-maker." Mr. Lascelles replied, "I am glad of it; I suppose your employments at home are pretty numerous, so that you have not leisure to work much for yourselves; and as my wife informs me, this good girl is an acquisition in the village, you may find her very useful, and she may be a nice companion for you, she has read a great deal I find, and her good mother is *so* respectable." There was nothing to be said, and the Miss Jennings's escaped.

"Poor, vain young creatures," said Mary Humphries, "I am sorry for them, they are neither like gentry nor farmers' daughters." "Dear mother," replied Esther, "I thought they were very agreeable young ladies." "Well, my dear, that's a very christian spirit of yours, and I wish to my heart I could learn of you in that respect, for I never hear you speak evil of any one." Margaret Beal smiled

as she walked about her little dwelling, and whispered something softly to herself. "What is my aunt smiling at," said Esther. "Never do you mind, dear." "Come, sister," said Mary Humphries, "tell us what you be saying." "Why, if you *will* have it, Mary, I was saying, that neither you nor Esther, had hit the right nail on the head: if you had finished your speech, you had been pretty near the truth, if you had said, they were not like what farmers' daughters *should be*; but they are exactly like what farmers' daughters *are*, and what they will be, till squires come to live in their own houses. There's that fine hall, with the burning of Troy town over the mantel-piece, with the blue and pink panes of glass all along the windows, and ever so many of the squire's grand relations hanging round the room. Why, its just for all the world like squires' daughters sitting down in their own house, and as they pays the rent, they can't fancy but 'tis their own. Well, there they are, nice fine grown girls—have been used to ride, ever since they could run alone; and what's so natural, but that when the father sees them grow up, he should mount them on the finest horses in his stable; and its been the talk for many years, what genteel figures they cut on horseback. Well, then, the next

thought is, who knows but they may make their fortunes. And then, the mother, poor thing, told me one day, 'twould be a pity to spoil her Tiny's hand with work ; for, when the great lord came there, he noted Tiny's pretty hand and arm. So the father is proud of their riding, and the mother is proud of their pretty white hands, and there isn't a race round the country, but they are to be seen ; and its the talk for a week after, what one said, and another said. All this is very bad for those girls, though its very natural." " But I thought, aunt, the young ladies seemed to come very regularly to church." " Ah, my dear, so I thought, too, and seemed to behave decent ; though Betty Smith tells me, that there's been a deep trap laid there, to catch her master." " Dear me, aunt, how shocking ! Do you believe that ? Do you think any body would go to church, for such a wicked purpose as that ?" " My dear, I don't know ; I should be sorry to judge any body wrong ; I only tell you what poor Betty said, and she is not given to evil surmises ; her heart has been very heavy about it, since she heard her master say, about a fortnight ago, that he was pleased to see the Miss Jennings's more attentive at church than they used to be." " Mr. Kemp is a good man, I suppose, aunt ?"

“ No doubt, my dear, an uncommon good young man ; you may say, that *his* religion has been profitable for the life that now is, and for that also which is to come.” Here Margaret Beal related all she knew of Michael ; and dwelt more particularly on the services he had rendered his late master.—“ Ah, that’s what I have often told you, Esther,” said her mother, “ to drop a word now and then : though sown in weakness, it may be attended with a blessing.” “ My dear mother ! I am so afraid of getting to be a talker ; there’s nothing I have such a dread of as hypocrisy.” “ My dear, that’s one of the snares of the father of lies ; and so, for fear of hypocrisy, you haven’t a word to say for your good God, who has brought you from darkness to light.” “ Well,” said Margaret, “ let her alone, my dear ; I think Esther will shew forth God’s praise by her life, even though her lips should be silent.”—“ Thank you, my dear aunt, you have always been hopeful about your poor Esther, and thought well of her, with all her faults. I can only love you, and pray to God to bless you, and *that* I do every day.”—“ Dear, good girl,” said her aunt ; “ I am very glad, Hetty, that you never took to ride about the country.” “ I never had an opportunity, aunt.

I dare say I should have liked it, if I had.”
—“No doubt, child,” said her mother;
“as face answereth to face, so doth the
heart of man to man.”

We will leave these good people, and follow the Miss Jennings's to their dwelling. They had talked a little by the way, and but little; for the sight of Mr. Lascelles—his cool, yet happy method, of putting folly in its place, without leaving one painful impression by a harsh word;—the love of the soul, which bore down every angry feeling against lightness and folly, beamed through his eye, even while his voice censured;—all this made its impression; and the Miss Jennings's were sobered, they knew not how: yet, no sooner did they enter the paternal abode, than they began. Their sisters were full of enquiries. “Well; and what says the new lady of the mode?” “Oh, very humble—very much obliged—very willing to execute all our commands.” “No doubt.” Their father was sitting by the fire-side, his temper somewhat ruffled by the disappointment of the morning—some bad success in the sale of his cheese—low price of corn—and the failure of his factor;—and, as he saw his idle daughters playing with parasols, which his own folly had purchased—“Pair of soles!” said he, “I wonder what it means!—Does

it mean, that the poor old father shall walk his shoes off his feet, to put idle girls on horseback ? Pair of soles ?—does it mean, that the poor old father and mother shall slave, and almost sell their *souls*, to send their mincing, idle girls, about the village, when they ought to be churning ;—dressing them up, when they ought to be washing shirts and sheets ?” “La, Pa ! what’s the matter, pa ?” said Miss Tiny, making up to him. “Get away, you lazy slut ; what will you ever be good for ?” and then he muttered something between his teeth, about Mr. Kemp.—“No ; he has more sense.” Miss Louisa, thinking to divert her father’s anger, by making him laugh, said, “she supposed Mr. Kemp would marry Betty Smith ; and indeed it would be a very good match for him ; she would take care nothing should be wasted.”—“A good thing, too ; there’s no need to sneer at Betty Smith ; she was a much prettier girl than any of you.” They stared at one another, and were silent.—“And, that you may learn not to turn up your noses, and give yourselves airs, your mother’s father was carter to Betty Smith’s father.” This was no time for Mrs. Jennings to offend her husband ; indeed, she was not a woman to offend any one ; but she was hurt that he should let her down, as *she* thought, before her

own children, and the tears sprang to her eyes, and she looked vexed and pained. Her husband was sorry; for she had been a good wife: so he said, "Come, come, Mary; you and I have travelled comfortably, don't let you and I fall out for a trifle; but do set these idle girls to work; for work they must, or they must starve. I never see them do one earthly thing of use. They seem very busy, and what is it all about? They can't even make their own clothes. I heard them talk this morning about a new dress-maker. Well, thinks I, to buy them and pay for them, that's enough—sure they might tack them together." "La, pa!" said Miss Antoinette, (who thought she would try once again)—"La, pa! why, didn't you know that the dress-making was quite a business of itself?" In vain mamma frowned, to make her child understand that *this* was not the right time, and that papa could not bear it. The foolish girl proceeded, till her father's scholer became ungovernable. They *should* go out, he declared they *should* go out, and get their living some how; and he pulled at the harmless curtain. "And what's this good for, but to make the people laugh at ye?—No; if they won't dairy at my house, they *shall* dairy some where else. Now, ye know my mind; ye shall get your

living—ye *shall*, I say!”—The girls were terrified. The thing he said, he stood to, right or wrong; and not all their mother’s nods and smiles could cheer them; they anticipated all the degradation, in the eyes of those whom they had often despised, and treated insolently; and they judged by themselves, that it would be a triumph to their inferiors. Even poor Esther, whom they had that morning visited with the air of patronage, they concluded would be among their enemies. Little did they know the heart of this excellent girl. But time developed it; and, the being on whom they had looked down, became, in the strictest sense of the word, their benefactress.

Mr. Jennings had always been considered a thriving man; but he, like many others, had lived up to his gains, and was now experiencing the inconvenience; the daughters had judged their father’s property as commensurate with his expenditure. This was by no means the case. He entirely depended on the times; and, as his property was sinking every year in value, so he was getting poorer; and, seeing no probable means of providing for his expensive family, “poverty was coming upon him like an armed man;” and his high-blown hopes, breaking suddenly beneath

him, soured his temper ; and, in the midst of these mortifications, he became unjust, and cast the whole blame of his own errors on his family. They, unused to controul, high spirited and vain ; systematically determined to oppose the necessary changes ; and seemed ready to prefer any expedient, to that which good sense and necessity pointed out. The brother, too, had been accustomed to the life of a gentleman. The few farming orders he gave, were soon expedited ; and considered as a burden that must be borne, to keep father in temper. Such was the state of things in Mr. Jennings's family, when Michael, coolly declining the honour of the alliance, had seemed to open the old man's eyes more clearly to their real situation. Mrs. Jennings was, in fact, the most to be pitied of the party. She was an ignorant, good-tempered woman, who had worked very hard to exalt her children ; and, though it was misguided zeal, one cannot but pity the parents, whose blind fondness hath led them to spend their labour for that which satisfieth not. And surely, it will touch every mother with sympathy, to see any one thus disappointed in hopes cherished for so many years, and to find herself surrounded by a set of listless, indolent beings, awake to no exertion, but that of

vanity;—cherishing no hopes, but the unfounded ones of romantic promotion, to which neither their birth, education, or personal attractions, had in the remotest degree entitled them. We cannot feel for them; but we *do* feel for the weak, suffering parent.

Mr. Lascelles, whose goodness of heart was universally acknowledged, by people who did not understand his principles, was the first person of whom Mr. Jennings thought, in his present exigencies:—"he would go to him straight, that he would!" So he began to walk quicker and quicker up and down his little parlour—"yes, I'll go; I'll go and consult with him." He had scarcely walked half way, ere he was met by his excellent pastor, whose keen eye saw at a glance, that something more than ordinary was working in his mind. "Well, my good Sir," said this kind-hearted minister, "so you are walking away very briskly this afternoon." "I was just going to your house, Sir."—"Indeed! why I don't very often see you there, Mr. Jennings."—"No, sir, that's very true; and I don't know that you would have seen me now, if I had been quite easy in my mind. Where all is right, we seldom think of the parson."—*Mr. Lascelles.* "I cannot understand that." *Mr. J.*—"Why, ye see, Sir, times of dan-

ger, and death, and such like, are times when ye are most wanted; it seems like your business, Sir, then.”—*Mr. L.* “Well, Sir; if you have any thing painful or distressing to communicate, will you do me the pleasure to walk to my house; any counsel or assistance *I* can afford you, are freely yours.” The farmer was unused to such prompt kindness;—it seemed to affect him; he stammered out something about “he didn’t deserve such kindness;” while *Mr. Lascelles* continued to say, that “any thing within his power—and it would be a pleasure to oblige him.”

By this time they reached the Rectory. As they entered the parlour, where *Mrs. L.* was sitting at work with her two little girls, they rose with that cordial politeness, which they were in the habit of practising continually; and *Mr. Jennings* was impressed with respect, for which he could not account. Thus it is, where urbanity is the ruling principle. It insensibly awes the mind, and prevents those advances to familiarity, which the ignorant are sure to fall into, unless thus repressed. They gathered up their little work-baskets. “Pray, madam, don’t disturb yourself, I can speak afore you;”—and these few words from *Mr. Lascelles*—“you had better remain, my love,”—determined her; and she resumed

her seat. There was something formidable, both to the speaker and to the hearers, in this interview. There never had been any thing like cordiality between them. Mr. Lascelles entirely disapproved of the manner in which this family was conducted ; but of course, he never interfered ; and a lofty politeness alone, of which they felt the force, kept them at a distance, and made them feel they were not in the number of his particular favourites. Yet, such was the confidence which true worth ever inspires, that there was not a moment's hesitation in the mind of Mr. Jennings, as to whom he should turn in sorrow. "Why, madam," said the farmer, twisting his hat about, and placing his stick quietly on the ground, "I've got a large family, and the times are very hard : and I thought, among your great relations and friends, and acquaintances, and what not, you might know of a situation as might suit some of my daughters. I thought they might do, (for they've had the best of educations,) for governesses to young ladies ; or, perhaps, they would not mind waiting on a lady of quality, only they must not be obliged to be in the servants' hall. They would'nt mind dining with the chaplain, or any thing of that."—"Mr. Jennings," said Mr. Lascelles, "the chaplain sits at the table of his lord,

where his rank places him; and, of course, would not be the companion of ladies' maids."—"Oh, I ask pardon, Sir; I didn't know."—"I thought you *did not*, and therefore I stated the fact; but, I really think your daughters would find the most permanent employment, as housekeepers in some steady family, or perhaps they might take in work."—Mr. Jennings hemmed; for he felt conscious they were incompetent to either. "My dear," said Mrs. Lascelles, "it strikes *me*, that Miss Jennings might keep a preparatory school for boys, under their father's roof. I cannot go out much, Mr. Jennings; but I think I could be of use to your daughters in this way; I have two dear little nephews coming on a visit to me, and if your daughters would come to my house every day, for a month, I would point to them such things, as they must principally attend to, in the training of little boys, as to their manners and habits, and point them to such books, as would be most likely to facilitate their progress."

"Madam, you are all goodness," said the happy father; "I will go home, and tell my daughters;" and Mr. Jennings returned to his own house. No sooner was the door closed, than Mr. Lascelles said, "Now, Mentorina, with your sense, and just discrimination, how you could ever

think of making the Miss Jennings's governesses to gentlemen's children, I cannot conceive!" "Why, my dear, little boys want to be kept nicely clean, and to take good exercise; and there are a few little gentlemanly habits, which I thought I could put Miss Jennings in the way of teaching them." "Doubtless you could; but, my love, where is the refinement of mind, and the thousand nameless delicacies, which none but a polished character could impart; and then, Mentoria, what can you do without the piety?" Mrs. Lascelles was silent; she felt that her husband was right. "I am in for it, my dear; what can I do?" "Do nothing: I am persuaded Miss Jennings will decline the employment; and, in that case, you know, the business is finished. It is an arduous undertaking, my love; and girls of such idle habits, will not easily be induced to accept such a charge."

As Mr. Lascelles had foreseen, so it proved. When the honest farmer, with heart elate, related to his wife all the goodness of Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles, she was pleased to see him pleased; but she greatly feared, whether her daughters would like to slave after children. "Would they like to eat, woman; tell me that?" said her husband. She was frightened at his

angry manner of speaking; and replied, "My dear, I can't think what is come to you to day; ye are not like yourself."—"No; that's very true; I am not. I have been a thriving man; that day is gone by; I'm poor, and I've a parcel of idle, gaping people about me, that can't bring in a shilling, and have got rare appetites; and want to be dressed out every day of their lives, like Duchesses. Oh, how much better would my girls look in a tidy stuff gown, like Fanny Meredith, at the Mill." "Fanny Meredith, indeed!" said Mrs. Jennings, with an involuntary look of astonishment; "I hope, Mr. Jennings, you don't compare my daughters with Fanny Meredith!" "Indeed I do not; I think Fanny Meredith as much beyond my daughters, in every respect, as Mr. Lascelles is beyond me." "Why, my dear, you seem to take a delight to bring me low to-day; first, to humble me before my children, about my poor dear father that's dead, and now to be trampling down my children to the dust, as I may say." "Wife; I never did mean to fret ye; but ye are very foolish about your children; ye seem blind to all their nonsense, and can't see a fault they have got." "Well, my dear, if I can't see their faults, I think you can't see their good qualities." This

gentle speech of the poor, vexed mother, had its effect ; and he again said, “ Mary, I do not wish to grieve you ; but the girls are out of their places, and ye must be sensible on’t.” “ Well, my dear, let us put them in gently.” “ Very well ; only see that it *is* done.” He gave her his hand, and she went to seek her daughters.

Louisa was standing with her back to the door, when her mother entered, putting her drawers in order ; Antoinette was sitting on one chair, her feet on another, and a book in her lap, reading. “ Come, put by the book ; I want to speak to you, girls. Why don’t ye speak, Louisa ? I’m worried out of my life.” “ Mother, how could I speak ; I had three pins in my mouth ; but you are in such a fluster ; what is the matter now ?” “ I came to tell you what Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles have been saying.” “ Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles ! Why, I never knew as they were much acquainted with our family !” “ No, indeed, nor I ; but your father seems to have taken an odd turn ; he has been and opened all his heart.” “ What ! to Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles ?” Tiny laughed, and said, “ she supposed papa was going to turn Methodist.” “ Well, don’t worry me, girls ; but hear what I’ve got to tell you.” They had scarcely patience to

hear their mother through. "I'd sooner be Becky, our girl, who washes the milk-pails, than I'd be tagging with a pack of little boys, two and two, before me to church. No, I thank you, mother; it shan't be said of me, that I'm a hard-hearted governess, seizing the poor little struggling things, just as the hawks do the young chickens. Much obliged to Mrs. Lascelles, all the same. Pray, who are we to thank for this very kind thought? Is it pa's own, or did Madam Lascelles put it in his head?" "Whose thought it is, I don't know," said the mother; "but *this* I know, that between ye all, I'm pretty nigh weary of my life; and when I'm laid under the green sod, perhaps ye may know that ye had once a good mother:" and with the dread of what she should say to her husband, she sank down in an hysteric fit.

The farmer had determined to give his wife sufficient time for explanation; so he mounted his horse, and rode off to a farmer's, about five miles distant. The first thought the young ladies had, was to run down, and fetch papa to assist in recovering mamma; and, by endeavouring to put into his head that mamma's distress was on account of the new plan, effectually to stop him. But, in this they were completely disappointed. Their father was

out, the sisters were gone for a walk, and there was not a single creature but themselves in the house. So the hartshorn was fetched, and cold water, and all the remedies they could think of; but it was full two hours before she was restored; and they then prevailed on her to go to bed, where her wearied frame at length reposed in peace. Still, they cherished a hope of being the first to inform their father. They knew he was fond of his wife, and would not willingly do any thing to teaze her. At length he arrived, and they began with a melancholy story, how ill poor mamma had been. "It's just as I thought; you are a couple of undutiful girls." Vain was remonstrance, and endeavours to persuade him, that it was the thought of parting with them which distressed her, and made her so ill. "Your mother was very well, when I left her, and would not all at once have been so distressed; you must have said something to worry her; I will know the truth. If I don't get it from you, I will from her." "Oh, pray, papa, do not begin again, and vex her beyond every thing." "Then speak the truth. When she proposed what I sent her about to you, did you make any, or the slightest objection?" "Of course, papa, we did not like to leave you and mamma and home." "Come, let's have

no nonsense, girls; say the truth, and the truth only; you deal fairly with me, and I'll be a kind father to you. You've set your faces against this plan of Mr. Lascelles." "I would rather do any thing, papa!" "Well, do something, I don't care what it is, but something ye *must* do." "I'd rather be a dressmaker, a great deal." "Can ye work, either of ye?" "Dear me, yes, to be sure we can!" "I didn't know it, I never saw any of your work." "I'm sure, papa, that's very odd," said Tiny, "the handkerchief you have got on now I hemmed and marked for you." "Well, I'm glad to hear ye can do something." The girls were glad to escape so well, and the plan was put in train the next day, of which we will speak more at a future time.

But I am anxious to return to my old friends; and perhaps the reader will have no objection to hear a little of Ellen Meredith, of Jemima, and of all our Valley Farm acquaintances. It was long since Stephen had seen his mother, and he had often anxiously desired and earnestly pressed her to come, but so many children were a great tie, and now Ellen was living at the Farm with Mrs. Finch, so she could be less easily spared. But the time was now come, when Michael was to make

one of his quarterly payments to Mrs. Finch, and as it was rather a leisure time with Stephen, he proposed going to the Valley, and visiting his mother. Stephen, on the old sure footed mare, with his young Michael before him, set out on his journey. How beautifully clean the fair haired boy was made, and how lovely his mother thought him in his nankeen vest and tunic, will easily be conceived and need not be related. Stephen took two days for the journey, on account of the child, and the old mare. As they drew near the scene of his early days, how did his heart vibrate to every sight and sound. There was the pond where he had led his horses to water, there was the spire among the trees, there were the chimnies of the Valley Farm, and now appeared in sight a group of children: here every trace of remembrance was lost: if he had known these, it must have been in the earliest stages of their life, and they could not remember him. So he looked anxiously forward for something more advanced, and soon his delighted eye rested on the form of his beloved sister, and he was soon recognized by this dear relative. "Is that your boy? Oh the lovely creature!" He was snatched from the horse with all the ardour of wild delight. The child had

from earliest infancy been so accustomed to hear his father called Stephen, that he had caught the word, and most frequently addressed him by that familiar epithet; and though every one thought it wrong, yet there was something so droll and amusing in it, that they had never properly checked him, so that when off guard, he continually said it, though never before uncle Michael, who seriously disapproved it; saying, it lessened that respect which ought to be rendered by a child to a parent. At this moment he exclaimed, "Oh Stephen, take me, take me." Ellen gave him up, and hearing him call her brother Stephen, she concluded he was not her nephew. "Are you going to the Level Bit?" "No, first to the Valley, I have business with your mistress: is she at home?" "Yes, and I'm sure will be glad to see you, it was but yesterday she was speaking of you with great kindness." In ten minutes he was in the presence of his old mistress, with his child in his arms. "Nice little boy," said Miss Jemima, "and are you Fanny Kemp's? then I must love you;" and she folded him gently in her arms. He made no resistance, and the maid bringing in the tea, and the bread and butter, he took a bit from her hand, as though she were an old acquaint-

ance, sitting quietly on her knee, and betraying no desire to leave her.

There is something remarkable in the influence which some persons possess over children: whether it is that some act more sensibly, and that the children feel the power, I know not, but there is certainly a great difference, and they are much sooner subdued by the authority of one person than that of another. Michael had more influence with this boy than his own father; and often remonstrated very seriously with both parents, on what he called their democratical form of government. "If your boy turns out well, all will be well, if *not*, you will live to repent this." Fanny would reply, "Oh, my dear brother, I long to see how you will govern your own children." "I hope *well* my dear: I think it is a duty every man owes to society, not to bring up rebellious members to the state." "I never viewed it in that light." "But you safely *may*, for the child that does not obey his own parents, is not likely to obey his king." "This is a very serious view you take of it, I shall attend to what you say." "Do, I have thought much of it: our father always brought us up well in that respect," said Michael. "In *every* respect," said Fanny. "Yes, certainly, but I mean to

say he insisted on our obedience. Thinking as you think," Michael replied, "I am surprised you did not follow his example." "Well, my dear brother, I am convinced, and you may rely on my attention to what you say." "Do, Fanny, for it involves important consequences." Thus they argued, and thus they always closed. Michael never insisted but when he knew he was really right, and Fanny always yielded, conscious that Michael never opposed without the deepest conviction of what he said, and if she had one mental reservation, it was only this, we shall see when my brother is a father: thus their little disputes ever ended, with an increase of love on both sides. Stephen, the judicious Stephen, much as he loved his Fanny, would say, "Why now, 'tis a pity my wife should argue against her brother, for he's sure to know best."

Reader, pardon this little peep at the internal politics of this happy family.

"Well, you seem very happy, Michael," said the fond father, "shall I leave you with that lady?" He looked at her, then looked round, and said, "Stay a little with that lady." "Sweet, lovely creature," said Jemima, "the very image of his mother, all her delightful openness of countenance!" Ellen thought to her-

self, "nothing can be more charming than my brother, and I think the boy is like *him*." So indeed he *was*, for he resembled both; but he had a peculiar cast of countenance which belonged to Fanny. It was not beauty, but something which went more to the heart, it seemed to say, what no human countenance *can* say, "I have no thought which seeks concealment," and though this cannot be, yet the mere semblance pleases us. "If you please, Ma'am," said Stephen, "I must take my boy to see his grandmother. I fear she would be hurt if she did not see him soon." "True," said Mrs. Finch, "I'm sure *I* should. I think you had better take him."

It was a sweet walk, the young father with his lovely boy, and the fond aunt gazing on him, anticipating the pleasure of the grandmother and grandfather, nor did they overrate the joy their presence would occasion. The neat inmates of the Level Bit clustered eagerly around the newly arrived. Stephen's delight was not without check, for he saw time making inroads on the countenances of both his parents. . It was four years since they had met, and the silent stealing of time's footsteps was visible to the eye of Stephen, and he could not help anticipating, when

the manly form of his father, and the feminine one of his mother, should be laid in the grave ;——yet they shall rise to life and immortality——“Thou art musing, boy,” said his father, “thou art thinking there’s one wanting, and so there is, but I suppose it couldn’t be helped.” “No, Father,” said Stephen, and he was glad of this turn given to his thoughts, “Fanny couldn’t leave baby, and it was too far to travel with such a young child.” “Yes, indeed,” said his mother, “I should love to see her.” “I am come to fetch you,” said Stephen, “I will not be refused, my Fanny has set her heart on having her mother.”

Stephen knew his mother’s feelings, and that she needed this assurance, for circumstances had prevented those minute attentions which the rich are able to pay. Their obligations to Michael were great, and had not yet been all discharged, and they felt they had no right to be generous at his expense ; therefore he was aware his mother might think he had been negligent, and his heart longed to explain to her and his father, which he took an early opportunity of doing. It was delightful intercourse, which this heart explanation led to. “You have thought I forgot you,

my dear mother?" "I, Stephen, never, no, never. There's a text in the scripture, 'My heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly,' and when I've been thinking of you, Stephen, my heart showeth me the love of my boy! Now, how could you suppose we expect any thing of you, young housekeepers like you!" "Well, mother, I'm glad ye did me justice, for my heart has yearned after you." "I'm very glad to hear ye say so, my dear, though I never doubted it; and now I'll show ye something that pleased me greatly, though I could not take it, Stephen. When I came to put the boy to bed, pretty fellow, down dropped a small packet out of his night shift, I observed that it was pinned up very carefully, and when I came to look, it was directed, 'For my mother Meredith,' and when I opened it, it contained this two pound note, three half crowns, and a sovereign. Now the letter I shall keep, but for the money, I could not, my dear boy; we do not want it, I think it would be wicked to take it." "Pray let me see the note, my dear mother, for I knew nothing of this business." "No, that's the beauty of the whole; oh, you're a lucky boy, Stephen!" "God has been very good

to me, mother." "Indeed he has."
Fanny's note ran thus :

My dear Mother,

These were gifts to Fanny Kemp when she married, and Fanny Meredith therefore has a right to dispose of them : they were laid by for purposes for which they never have been wanted, and I hope they will help you to come to Stephen and your own Fanny. Now the half crowns are for the boys, and the sovereign for Ellen Meredith.

"But I think its a shame to take it."
"Now, dear mother, if it would really make you uneasy, lay it out at some future day for the children, but do not refuse Fanny." "Well, my dear, I will do as you say : I think I may be safely guided by him ; husband, what do you think ?"
"Why I think I should not like to refuse that sweet young creature, because I believe its a pleasure to her to do us any kindness." "That it is father—Pray how does Ellen go on at the Valley ?" "Why, my dear, very well, but there's been a very disagreeable thing happened lately ; Poor Williamson, honest, excellent old creature." "Yes, that he is, I hope nothing has happened to him ?" "Nothing

very bad, only he took it into his head to fall in love with poor Ellen, and he said, he supposed she could not fancy him, and to be sure she could not: he has left her every shilling he may die worth, but it has made her place rather uncomfortable to her, because she does not like to see him unhappy, and she talks of leaving. I spoke to her mistress, and she said, poor foolish old man, I'm sorry for him. I replied, I hope you will not think the worse of our Ellen, and she said, poor thing, no, how can she help it? I am sadly vexed Williamson should be so very foolish, though to say truth, he has shown good taste, for Ellen is a nice looking girl." "Indeed she *is*, though I'm her brother that say it." "And why should not a brother speak well of his own sister, my boy?" "I'm sure I cannot tell, mother, its generally reckoned like praising oneself. Good night and good night, and I must go early to the Valley to-morrow, for though I went there first to settle some business for my master, I was so full of my boy, and talking of old times, that I quite forgot it: but it will do as well in the morning." "Pray, Stephen, is it true, a report that I have heard, that your master pays Mrs. Finch a hundred pounds a year?" "Indeed it is: I'm now come with the money in

my pocket." "Well, that is an extraordinary thing: who but your master would do such a thing as this?" "I'm sure I don't know, but he's not like any body else that ever I saw, he is so generous and yet he is so prudent." "Ah, that's the perfection of generosity, I think," said Meredith, and with this observation they separated for the night.

"I was in hopes," said Stephen, as he entered his room, "that my poor father would have proposed prayer, I couldn't say any thing, my lips seemed sealed. Is this the fear of man? Oh no, 'tis not, it really is not: but it is the fear of appearing to reprove my father, and that seems so unbecoming in me, that I cannot bear it: but I *can* and will pray for them," and this good son knelt down and prayed most fervently, that it would please God to enlighten his dear relations. This prayer was offered in faith, and if it was not answered, we well know that it was never offered in vain: it doubtless turned into his own bosom.

The repose of cottagers is commonly, in the language of scripture, "sweet." Stephen might be said to rise with the lark, for its matin peal was the first sound that greeted his ear, and his infant prattler, wearied with change and excitement, was

long ere his baby form seemed ready for the activity of the day. "Very sleepy, Stephen," and the fond parent breathed a father's prayer. He lingered, for he did not like to leave him to wake among strangers, lest surprise and alarm should succeed: but he found it useless to wait; so little uncle Frank was set to watch, while Stephen went to the Valley. The song of the early bird accompanied the tender father, and his heart was in tune for enjoyment, praise flowed spontaneously from his lips, and a sense of the divine presence gave the purest tinge to his spirit. Peace now, and peace for ever! His bosom swelled at the thought, and the expansive sense of incomprehensible blessedness, gave him for one moment an idea of unlimited happiness. Oh, what do the worldly lose, who confine their views and their pleasures to the base pursuits of earth! To the Christian, not a leaf trembling on the spray is indifferent! not a sound that is pleasurable but elevates him, not a voice that is alarming but fills him with gratitude to the author of his security! Safe, happen what may, who that had ever tasted these sublime sensations, would exchange them for the baubles of time; wealth, power, titles and distinctions, flattering, but fleeting and insecure. The

finger of the Almighty, pointed in displeasure, would wither the fairest earthly prospect, and chill the warmest hope : “ At the blasting of the breath of thy displeasure,” finely expresses what I would convey.

When Stephen arrived at the Valley, he saw Miss Jemima with her Bible in her hand, in her favourite walk : she slipped the volume into her pocket, and with condescending Christian simplicity, bade the young man a good morning ; “ and how is your little fellow-traveller, Stephen ? ” “ Well, Madam, but asleep ; I thought it best not to disturb him, for the weather is warm, and he is very young : I must be careful of my trust, or I know not what his mother will say ; I was obliged to beg hard for the pleasure of introducing him to his grandmother, he was *so* young, and it was *so* far.” “ All very natural,” said Jemima, “ and he really is *so* fine a creature. I suppose his uncle is very fond of him ? ” “ Yes, Madam, indeed he is. Could I see my mistress ? I quite forgot last night to deliver a parcel I had for her, and I made a point of coming down with it as soon as I rose, for I really did not feel easy till I had delivered it.” When Mrs. Finch entered, Stephen again apologized for his omission, and his excuse was

readily granted. "Shut the door, my dear Jemima. I suppose, Stephen, your mother has told you this foolish business of poor Williamson?" "Yes, Ma'am." "I never knew the man so weak," said Mrs. Finch, and she kept walking up and down the room in fidgetty uneasiness, "I suppose I must part with Ellen, its very awkward for the poor girl. I am so entirely satisfied with her, it vexes me exceedingly." "I'm very glad, Ma'am, you are pleased with my sister, and concerned at the necessity of her leaving you; but as you observe, it seems almost unavoidable." "Do you know of any place, Stephen, that might suit her?" "I dare say I could hear of one, Madam; what do you think her most qualified for?" "She works so well with her needle, that I think she might undertake a better place than mine." "Indeed, Madam, I never expect my sister to be better off than she is in your family, your unceasing kindness, and that of Miss Jemima to me and mine, make me very sorry for this necessary separation." "Well, you will think of your sister, Stephen, there is no haste, but I think it would be better she should go." "Undoubtedly, Ma'am." "I dare say you will be concerned to hear, *that* poor dishonest creature *Mason* has come to an

untimely end. He was engaged in a quarrel at a public-house, and following the person (in a hurry) down the stairs his foot slipped, and his head struck forcibly on some of the stones which lay at the bottom of the rough staircase: he received a violent blow on the temple: his medical attendant saw no immediate danger, but the fever which succeeded, was increased by the indiscreet use of strong liquor. I'm sorry to say his end was very awful. No contrition, but a rebellious, hardened spirit was manifest through the whole. His wife and children are come to the parish, but should she behave prudently, she will not want friends. Poor Mr. Kemp was never forgiven that removal, and Mrs. Fairbrother has gone so far as to say, it was the ruin of the family. Mr. Cooper, whose love of justice you well know, was so displeased by this, that he called on her, and insisted she should retract this unjust aspersion; he assured her if she did not, he should regard her as a person dangerous, and no longer consider her as an object worthy his accustomed attention. This alarmed her, for Mr. Cooper is a most liberal benefactor in many ways to this perverse woman: and Jemima, my dear, though you don't quite agree with Mr. Cooper, I believe in some

things, you know how very good he has been to this woman." "Yes, indeed, mother, Mr. Cooper is very liberal."

Stephen perceived that Mrs. Finch seemed pained that her daughter's praise of Mr. Cooper was qualified, for Jemima did not speak of him in the warm terms which she thought he merited, she said a few minutes after, "Your Mr. Lascelles is every thing with Jemima, pray how does he do, Mr. Stephen?" "Very well, Madam, he goes on doing every body good." "Oh yes, he does every body good, I dare say, he is a very good sort of man I believe: but I think there are other good men in the world besides Mr. Lascelles." Jemima was silent. Stephen only replied, "Certainly, Ma'am. How is your son, Madam, Mr. James Finch?" "Nearly as tall as you, Stephen, he makes his mother look an old woman." "Master was saying, Madam, he expected him in our parts." "Yes, it will not be his fault if he does not soon make one of your family at the Brow, but I hardly know how to spare him. You may tell Mr. Kemp I do not forget his promise to be a father to this boy if ever he loses his mother," and the tear trembled in her eye as she spoke. "I am sure I don't know any one I would trust him to sooner. I am happy to say

he is very steady." "Yes," said Jemima, "you may tell Mr. Kemp that he will give him no anxiety, Stephen, that he will be quite content to stay at home." "Yes," said Mrs. Finch, with a very peculiar look, "he is almost as good as his sister, tell your master." Jemima walked away without saying one word, and Stephen admired, what he justly thought her wise conduct.

This young woman had made up her mind to be guided completely by the word of God, this was her first determination, every other was contingent: all her views were fixed beyond time; she was like a traveller on a wide plain, who knowing that his path lies to the west, keeps his eye on some bright illuminated spot in the distance, and tramples beneath his feet without ever knowing it, thousands of vivid flowrets which attract other travellers: to *him* they are nothing, his object is distant, and all which can divert him from that end is indifferent to him, or disregarded by him. Jemima carefully avoided all that could offend her mother, and never contended for immaterial things. She would often say to herself, "Dear, excellent mother, in nothing that is immaterial or indifferent will I ever oppose thee."

Thus resolved, life glided by, its trials were met in a spirit of resignation, and its pleasures hailed with gratitude and warmth, and in all essential points the firmness of this excellent girl was never to be shaken. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: ye must be born again: without me ye can do nothing: he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it: look unto me and be ye saved." In the spirit and the letter these texts she never would resign, and it was on these subjects alone, where every pharisaical pretension was shaken to the root, that Jemima and her mother ever disagreed.

Mr. Cooper, the amiable, charitable Mr. Cooper, was Mrs. Finch's standard of perfection, and she knew she stood high in his opinion, and was perfectly astonished, that such a young girl as Jemima should have an opinion on such subjects: and poor Jemima was sometimes astonished herself, but then she would say again, "My poor mother, I cannot give it up. 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,' and oh how precious to me is thy soul, my mother." How often she prayed, and how fervently, can hardly be conceived by any who do not feel like anxiety for the eternal happiness of their relatives. Of all this the mother was ig-

norant, she only fancied that her poor girl had picked up some notions, concerning which she showed strange obstinacy, and she would often feel really astonished that she should stand out for such trifles, and frequently repeated, "Why, child, this is very well to the Bible people, but what is it to you and me?" "My dear mother, it is *every thing* to us, it is our hope, it is our life!" "I can't see it, Jemima." "Oh, my dear mother, I do wish you *could*, my uncle saw it and felt it." "My poor dear child, thy uncle had got some odd notions, and your head has been crammed with them ever since." "No, indeed, mother, not my head, but I can say my heart is warmed by them, and I look forward to a reunion with my beloved uncle through these hopes alone." "Well, Jemima, you are a good girl, and very dutiful to your mother, and I do love you most sincerely, and confide in you entirely, but to talk about that which I do not understand, and of which I cannot see the utility, you couldn't wish it, child," and thus their converse generally ended.

We must return to the Level Bit, and watch the waking of the little Michael. His young uncle had scarcely any patience with his charge. Rose had desired

him not to attempt waking him. "If you do," said Rose, "brother Stephen will never have you to the mill." This threat was hardly sufficient to keep Frank at his post; and now he touched him just with the tip of his finger, then again he pretended to lay the clothes straight, then he went to the window, and he coughed as loud as he could. At last he succeeded, and baby opened his eye to the great delight of the young prisoner. But no sooner was his eye opened, than it closed again, not indeed from weariness, but he saw not the object he sought, and he was fearful: at length hearing no one speak to him, he raised himself on his little fat elbow, and called loudly for Stephen: Rose immediately ran up to him, but every effort was ineffectual, he would not suffer her to touch him, and until his father returned, he sat vainly attempting to dress himself. But the manly child shed no tears, nor betrayed other impatience, except now and then calling, "Stephen, Stephen," to the great amusement of every member of the family who gathered round him. The fond father was soon at his side, and his boy's hand was clasped round him, and, "Where you been? where you go? where Fanny? where uncle Michael? Get my hat." Not yet my boy, we must have

some breakfast, and his delighted grandmother was not long ere his fondling affection was bestowed on her, and he was in the garden at the side of his grandfather, digging with his uncle Frank, and as much domesticated as any part of the family.

To the lover of infancy, its soft lisplings have an irresistible charm, nothing is indifferent, every action is grace, and every word and tone finds its way to the heart. How have I bent over the glowing features of a sleeping babe, observed the smile which some illusive dream had created, and watched the meandering of the blue veins, and the fair open forehead, and how have I wished that disease might never prey upon that form, or sorrow agitate that panting bosom. It was a weak wish, it was a fruitless wish, disease hath visited, and sorrow hath made inroads, but it is over, and the mourner is at rest. Yes, he slept in peace!

Pardon this digression, reader, which the thought of sleeping infancy recalled.

Mrs. Meredith, at first, resisted the idea of going back with Stephen; but, at the end of three days, when he talked seriously of departing, the tear was in her eye, and she said, "Oh, my dear boy, how shall I part with you?" "There is no need, mother," said Stephen, "Ellen is coming

from her place, and she can guide the house here." "Well, my dear, I can have no objection; but we shall hear what your father says. I never did leave home before; and pray, how am I to go?" "That has all been thought of, mother. If you can get a tilted cart, we may ride very comfortably."

The affair was arranged, and they set out. It was a pleasure that Fanny had never hoped for; and, though her husband said he should bring her, if possible, she could not conceive which way it might be effected.

We must pass over the interior of this heavy day, and let Williamson come in for orders. He had carefully avoided Stephen, for he was ashamed to see him. But, however, there was no escaping; for he must take orders; so he came in, and stood, as usual, while Mrs. Finch put questions, to which he gave his usual hesitating replies. But, there was something about Williamson, which, with all his errors, was sure to make its way to the heart of his hearers; and, ere he had finished, his faults were forgotten. They both looked at him with the same feeling, and concern that an honest, respectable man, had made himself ridiculous. To the astonishment of both Mrs. Finch and Stephen, he pounced upon the subject. "I dare say, you have heard

what an old fool I've made of myself; but I couldn't help it; it shall be made up to her, for all the trouble I've given her; every shilling I have shall be hers." "Oh, do not talk of it," said Stephen; "we should all be sorry to lose you, Williamson." "I'm sure I can't tell what for; I'm a stupid, blundering old fellow." He desired to be remembered to Mr. Kemp and Fanny, and seemed glad to slink out of the room as he had slunk in. "I'm sorry for him," said Mrs. Finch; "he has made himself unhappy to no purpose. I depend on you to bear your sister in mind, and to let us know of the first eligible situation".

Stephen departed in a little tax-cart with his mother, for his own dwelling. The meeting was cordial on both sides, and Stephen's mother had the appearance of the wife of some respectable yeoman. Though, after marriage, Stephen's affections were diverted into another channel, he felt what we wish to impress on the hearts of children, how necessary it is for their own happiness, to pay these minor attentions to their parents. It sweetens life's decline, to find gratitude in those on whom they have lavished so much care.

The thought struck Stephen, that perhaps Mrs. Lascelles might want an upper servant, and he knew no human being, to

whose care he would so soon entrust his sister. He considered himself unfortunate in thus breaking up a happy family ; but there was no alternative : either Williamson, or Ellen ; and this man was so necessary to his mistress, that the bare idea was rejected immediately. When it was mentioned to Fanny, she said, “ The sooner you go the better ; for places are no sooner empty, than there are persons to whom the place is an object. They are treated with such kindness, and the examples continually before them are of so excellent a tendency, that one ought rather to rejoice than to hesitate. So away my dear man.”

When he reached the Rectory, he found Mrs. Lascelles deeply engaged. She entertained him to stop a little, and she would attend him. “ Madam,” said Stephen, as he entered the room. She bade him a cordial good morning, and hoped the little excursion had been useful to him and the child. These kind speeches past, and Stephen opened his feelings. “ I have a sister, Ma’am, a very steady young person, who has been at service many years, and quits her mistress, not for any fault, but on account of some particular circumstances. I thought, perhaps, you might know of some place that would suit her ; and, if you

did, I'm sure I should be very thankful to have my sister in any situation you were so good as to recommend." "Mr. Meredith, is your sister, may I ask you, is she a religious character?" "I cannot say, Madam, in confidence, that she *is*; but she is not an opposer; and I believe she respects religious people: indeed, I know she does." "Where has she lived, Mr. Meredith?" "Ever since my wife quitted, she has lived in the employment of Mrs. Finch, and her mistress speaks very highly of her, and would not have parted with her, but"— "But what, Mr. Meredith; for I like to know the cause of separation?" "I should not, Madam, have taken the liberty of telling you things of this sort, but as you desire it;" and he related the circumstances which led to Ellen's quitting. Mrs. Lascelles smiled, and said, she "thought the young woman perfectly right; and assured him, that if she could in any way assist her views, she would bear her in mind."

As soon as Mr. Lascelles returned from his walk, she related Stephen's visit, and its cause. He appeared thoughtful for a minute, and then said, "I should not wonder if this was the very young woman, of whom I heard Mr. Walker speak, as a person distinguished by Mr.

Kemp ; and only resigned for the best of reasons, that he did not think her a religious character." " That is very likely ; for I put the question to Mr, Meredith, and he honestly said, he could not regard her in that light." " Well, then, do you take care, my love, not to lead my flock astray, by introducing Moabitish women." " Oh, my dear ; and so you would keep this poor young creature from the privileges of sitting under a Gospel ministry, for fear Mr. Kemp and your other good young men, should lose their hearts." " I would ; and so look to it, my dear. Do not bring temptation in the way of my good young men ; it would be like introducing him into the same house ; he *must* see her continually. No, it must not be ; you know plenty of folks, Mentoria ; you *must* get her a place at a distance."

Mrs. L. " You are a dear, arbitrary thing ; and I must obey, I suppose." " Yes, indeed." " Well, enough then for the present. I really know of no place ; and I shall not be very active in search ; because, such a young woman as this, will not long be in want, and I had rather have nothing to do with it. But, I should like to hear why you make such a great point, of not introducing her in our village ?" *Mr. L.* " Simply for the reason I mention to you. I know

how pleased our excellent friend, Walker, was with the firmness of Mr. Kemp's principles, in a case where few men's principles are firm; and I should be sorry we turned tempters. Walker pointed her out to me, and related the circumstances on the day Mr. and Mrs. Meredith were married; if you recollect a tall girl, of very pleasing exterior?" "My love, you know I was not there." "True, true; I had forgotten that." "But I have some faint remembrance, that you mentioned it to me in the evening, and with high commendation of the steadiness of Mr. Kemp's principles." "Yes, I did. There are a variety of consultations in the world; I have had one of a very different nature. I have been asked this afternoon to get a place at Court for a gentleman." "Indeed! Who can it be for?" "You must guess." "Is it your clerk? Does he wish to be clerk at the Chapel Royal?"

Mr. L. Oh, no indeed; nothing so humble as that, I assure you; it was to be about the person; some little light work, he didn't care what; just something to do, and a good salary; he would not have minded how light the work, because he's getting old; he liked to see the King on Court days, and he should not mind if it was not more than £200 a year.

Mrs. L. Who can you have been talking to ; some deranged person, I suppose ?

Mr. L. No, indeed ; a substantial farmer in this place.

Mrs. L. Oh, I know now ; there can be but one ; it must be Mr. Joyce.

Mr. L. The very same. Always some castle, poor man ; on the very brink of eternity, and yet perpetually planning some change. Never satisfied ; always full of hopes. Some new relative starting up ; some consequent change in his mode of life. It may be truly said of him, "he is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest." Poor Mr. Joyce ; his history is a remarkable one. He was born with very good expectations ; his father was a man who had travelled in early life, and it was his great delight to tell his adventures : there was not an island in the Mediterranean, in which he had not had some personal adventure. Like most travellers, he was thought to exceed the truth in his descriptions ; and, it was a standing joke against him, that he went from Majorca to Minorca in a post-chaise. Nothing provoked him more, than to ask him in what vehicle he made such or such a journey. As his fortune was easy, and his connexions limited to this village, he was reduced to the necessity of taking his pipe at the fire-side

of our little public-house, where he was looked up to as an oracle. One may truly say, he lived upon the husks of his past adventures; for nothing new could arise. He got old and infirm; and the extent of his travels was from his own fire-side, to that of 'mine host,' and I believe sincere tears were dropped on his grave, by the landlord and his wife. This boy was the only child of his parents. His abilities were not great; and his father being accustomed to a constant recital, thought more of shining himself, than of making his son a brilliant character. I believe the village schoolmistress's stock of knowledge, with a couple of years at a very moderate boarding-school, finished his education. He married very young, and very imprudently; and being now a widower, without children, very tired of his wife's relations, who have preyed upon him for many years, seems desirous to begin life anew, and to try the humours of the Court, having been greatly disappointed in the village. I told him 'I really had no interest.' He seemed surprised; and said, 'he thought your uncle was a Lord, and he had always understood that Lords could do any thing.' I told him laughingly, that 'as soon as your uncle had made me a Bishop, he should have all my interest; but, as I did not expect that, I

thought we had better try to make ourselves happy in that state of life in which it had pleased God to call us.' He seemed to attribute that to my want of will, which you well know my limited power forbids ; but he is too weak a man to talk with rationality, and I did not wish to pain him, by placing his absurdity in the right light ; so I withdrew, assuring him he must apply elsewhere for Court favour. " It is astonishing," said Mrs. Lascelles, " how minds of a certain cast expect the most preposterous advancement ; and ask as coolly for £200 a year, as a child would for a bit of bread and butter, when he was hungry. I have heard my uncle say, he had taken the pains to note every application which had been made to him ; and he believed, that were it possible to balance the account, there were not places in the kingdom to satisfy the demands."

We left Miss Jennings and her sisters in the uneasy state of persons compelled to work against their will, with an angry father and a fatigued mother, a giddy hare-brained brother, as unfit to provide for himself as his sisters, and on the following morning the father was in the same state of determination that something they should do, without pointing to any thing. They really were to be pitied more than blamed,

for the only destination to which their education had pointed was marriage, and of that there seemed no probability of their being called on to fill. Their heads were crammed with romantic notions, their persons decorated beyond their station, their conversation consisted mostly of weak, short sentences, delivered in a decisive tone, only intercepted by a vacant laugh, sometimes very good, sometimes abominable, shocking, horrid, equally inapplicable, so that they were unfit to teach and unwilling to learn, not an uncommon state. The heart of Mrs. Lascelles might be said to yearn over them; she felt that the blame was with their parents, and thought it hard that they should thus suddenly be thrust into the world without a hand to guide or direct them. After supper, as she sat in converse with her husband, "but these Miss Jennings', my dear, if you do not think them competent to the care of boys, what can they do?" "That must be *your* concern, my love; I have not the most remote idea how to provide for ignorance and indolence."

The following morning Esther Humphries brought home some dresses for the Misses Lascelles. As she was leaving the room she said, "Madam, two young ladies called on me to look at dresses, but I did

not take the liberty of showing Miss Lascelles' without your leave." "Oh, my good girl, that was all very right and proper, but I give you leave to show any thing of mine or my daughters, if it can be of the slightest service to you; but I did not know there were any young ladies in this village." "Ma'am, their name was Jennings." "Did they give you any orders?" "They desired to see some dresses." "Very extraordinary; when was this pray?" "Yesterday morning, ma'am." "Very extraordinary," said Mrs. Lascelles musing. Poor Esther was afraid she was making mischief, and repeated that she did not shew them. "My good girl, if you had I should not have had the slightest objection. But I cannot understand how young women in the situation of the Misses Jennings could have any orders to give you." The matter grew visibly worse, and poor Esther fearing she was doing some one an injury, begged Mrs. Lascelles to take no notice of what she had said. The young ladies perhaps had only called for curiosity; she hoped she should not do them any injury in her good opinion by what she said; in short, every word she uttered deepened Mrs. Lascelles's view of her innocence and benevolence, and we may say she never lost that good opinion which Mrs. L. formed of her during this short interview.

As the innocent girl returned home Fanny Meredith met her: she had the tears in her eyes, and Fanny said, "Well, Esther, what's the matter?" She curtsied and replied, "Nothing of any consequence." "Oh, but my good girl, do tell me; remember you speak to a friend." "I really do believe its not of the least consequence." "You believe, you don't *know*?" "I really don't;" and she smiled through her tears. "Well, you know we women are very curious, and I must know what is the matter." The simple girl related her tale, and said she feared she had done hurt to those ladies by telling Mrs. Lascelles. "You should have asked her not to mention it." "I did, ma'am, and she promised she would not. I certainly intended no wrong, but I saw madam did not approve." "My good girl, Mrs. Lascelles feels as a mother towards us all; if you were to do wrong, if I were to do wrong, she would be grieved; but she has no anger against us, Esther. As for the Miss Jennings's, I don't think she knows much of them, for they are not religious girls; but would it ease your mind if I were to go and tell her you were grieved you had prejudiced her against them?" "Oh, yes, it would." "Well then I'll go, and do you take the little girl." Esther took the child, and waited the return of her mediating friend.

Mrs. Lascelles was crossing the hall to go up stairs when she saw Fanny through the glass door, and her condescending hand was immediately extended to open it. "Sweet lady," said Fanny to herself, "no more pride than a baby." "What were you saying, Mrs. Meredith?" "Nothing of any consequence; I was only taking the liberty to love you, Madam." "Dear, good creature, I love to be loved." "But, Madam, I'm come on very urgent business; for poor Esther is greatly afraid she has done something wrong this morning." "She has done something which has filled me with admiration of her simplicity and feeling; I never saw so much of her before, nor ever liked her half so well." "Then, Madam, will you promise me to say nothing to the Miss Jennings's of what poor Esther said to you?" "You may tell her she may rely upon me. It is a rare thing for Miss J. and I to meet, but it has so happened that I saw her father yesterday, and something that passed then led me to express surprise that Miss Jennings's should employ a mantua-maker: this is all. Pray tell poor Esther to let her heartrest." "Good morning, Madam;" and Fanny Meredith soon joined Esther and her baby.

After relating what Mrs. Lascelles had

promised; "now, Esther, let your heart rest, for you are as secure as though you had never opened your lips." "Thank you, dear, kind friend, you've been a comfort to me indeed, and so you have ever since I knew you. Was it not you who showed the baby's frock I made to Mrs. Lascelles, and who got me four shirts to make for Mr. Kemp? I never shall forget the favours you have done me." "Why, child, while you work as neatly as you have done, you never will want work; people are always glad to get their things well done, you know; and, besides, you serve the Lord, Esther, and he never suffers his people to want." "Well, good day to you, Mrs. Meredith; my mother will wonder where I've been."

Mrs. Humphries did wonder, and was really glad to see her girl return; her love for this young creature bordered on idolatry, which is not very wonderful, for she had always been very amiable, and since she had become religious, her conduct had been almost blameless. She might really be said to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour. "Well, child, and what could keep ye so long?" She related the whole to her mother, and how uneasy she had been. "Ah," said her mother, "a close tongue maketh a wise head." "Why now

ye wouldn't blame Esther for that," said Margaret, "wasn't it right the girl should ask leave of Madam; how should she know what to do if she did not?" "That is true," said Mary. "Yes it is," said Margaret; "but you have got such a way of telling the child her faults, that I think you blame her sometimes where there's no occasion." "Well, that's like enough; but then she knows I love her; don't ye, Hetty?" "Ah, mother, there's no doubt of that." "To be sure 'twas best ye should tell Madam Lascelles, who could know how she would take it." "Oh mother, don't you mistake, she didn't take it amiss; but I understand now that those ladies are not so rich, and they can't so well afford to put their clothes out, and I suppose Madam Lascelles thought it was rather extravagant to think of it, and I suppose they are friends of hers." (*Margaret, laughing,*) "Esther, child, ye have got a strange fancy to put them girls out of their places." *Mrs. H.* "Now, Margaret, that's not like you; we shall sin if we don't mind." "Well, thank ye for that good counsel; so I'll stop before I go any further. How true it is, Mary, that man is not only born to trouble, but born to sin. I'm sure when I would do right, evil is present with me."

"Margaret, do you remember, when we

were girls, how we did hate that saying we didn't think we had as much sin as that good Mr. Bartlett used to say we had. Many a time have I thought to myself, what a wicked heart that man must have, he seems always to be judging us by himself. Well, there we were wrong indeed; he was a saint if ever there was one on this earth; he was so humble that I've heard his own maid say, if he had contradicted her or said any thing at all sharp in the day he was sure to beg her pardon before he went to bed at night, and she said she used to go about almost ready to knock her head against the wall to see his humility." "Dear me, aunt, wasn't that very odd?" "Why, my dear, she was a good woman, and she had an uncommon respect for her master, and so couldn't bear that he should humble himself to her." "Well that was becoming, too, I think, aunt, was it not, because I have seen some servants who fancied their religion made them equal to their masters." "Ah, child, that's the pride of the corrupt heart, that's not true Christianity." "I don't know what pleasure people can take in going out of their station." "If that's quite true, Esth r, you may thank God for it, for it is not your own nature, child, but a new nature that he has given you, so do ye be thankful, I

say." "Yes, mother, I am, I can say I do feel that, and I am quite contented in my happy station."

Thus did these good cottagers converse together, and their lives passed in simple faith and christian obedience; and which best loved Esther, the aunt or the mother, was difficult to say. There was this difference in their mode of showing it; the mother never thought it necessary to gild the truths she delivered, the aunt thought her little niece the most perfect being she had ever met; if she saw any thing particularly pretty, it was just like my Esther; if she heard of a good action, ah, that's just what my Esther would have done; if any one was bold and forward, how different is my Esther! and the mother would reply,—“If Esther Humphries is not spoiled it won't be Margaret Beal's fault.”

Every morning, during Stephen's absence, Michael had wandered to the Mill to breakfast, for he said, Fanny must be lonely; she must miss that boy, I miss him myself. “How very kind this is of you, my dear brother,” and she would place her little girl upon his knee while she poured out his breakfast, and the meek baby would look up in his face with a doubtful expression; this intercourse ended well, and the little girl was soon in fa-

your with her kind uncle. But the day arrived when the travellers returned, and all things were again in their wonted channel, and the whole family group were united in the evening under the walnut-trees. "My dear brother has been so kind, he begins I believe now to like the baby." "My dear Fanny, I always liked her, as I always must like every thing connected with you, but you would not have me forsake my old friends." "Oh, by no means, I feel the happiness of my boy having such a friend," and Stephen looked on with delight. But there was that gravity and decision in Michael's character which, without designing it, always held an upper place. Stephen, though he loved him as a brother, continued to reverence him as a master, and things were in this train when the talk of the Miss Jennings's being "quite come down," as the village people called it, reached the Brow. Betty Smith came in with a look half piteous, and yet with the air of one who had foreseen the evil and thought it was no more than was to be expected, she said, "Master, have ye heard the news? "I've heard nothing particular, what news do you mean?" "About the Miss Jennings's." "No, Betty, I've heard nothing of the Miss Jennings's, at least nothing particular." "I can't say but I'm

sorry for 'em though, poor things, they hav'nt been so humble as they should have been." "Well, but Betty, what is the matter, what have you heard?" "That they are going to take in plain work, and make gowns and such like." "Well, Betty, is there anything so very unfortunate in that? depend upon it, the man or woman who is most busy, provided he is innocently busy is the happiest person." "Then, Sir, the Miss Jennings's are not of that mind; they never did like work, 'tis clean contrary to what they've been used to, they were fond of reading, Sir." "I am very glad to hear that," said her master." "Oh, Sir, I don't believe it's the sort of reading as you like; it's about great lords, how they married farmers' daughters, and how young ladies had lost their parents, as they thought, and been brought up in distress, and all at once, when nobody expected any such thing, they found their parents and such quantities of money, and those who had had nothing to help 'em were found out to be dukes and such like." "Why, Betty, you are perfectly right, this is not the reading I approve, and this is what has filled these poor young women's heads with such foolish notions." "Yes, Sir, I dare say it is, and instead of the Miss Jennings's fortunes being so grand as

the books say, they will be obliged to work like poor Esther Humphries." "Well, Betty, if this is all, I think you are throwing away your pity." "Why, Sir, it isn't exactly their being obliged to work, but, poor things! there's a good many people in this village who think but lightly of 'em, and I can't fancy as they'll have much pity in their humiliation." "That will not be to the credit of the village, Betty, and I hope Miss Jennings will have sense enough not to mind it." "'Twill be a good thing Sir, if they don't, but I should think very few young ladies would mind it more." "There is one thing I have observed, Betty, and I think it a great error, calling farmers' daughters young ladies; what could you say more of the Squire's daughters? and though I'm far from wishing to take from their respectability, I think it would add to it if every one kept to that station assigned them by Providence. As, Christians, Betty, we should render to all their due, but these exaltations are *not* due." "I'm sure, Sir, you know best, but they are always called young ladies." "They would have felt much less, Betty, if they had always kept in that place to which they were born; I can tell you that my keeping where Providence put me has been no hindrance, on the contrary, my

betters have respected me the more. But pray, Betty, who told you this news?" "I heard it at Mr. Lascelles, Sir; the servants say their mistress has been talking of nothing else for two days past but what she could do to serve Miss Jennings, and she has been having 'em up, one at a time, consulting what could be done, and the maid said if the Miss Jennings's had been her mistress's own relations she couldn't have been more anxious about them. Dear excellent lady, that's just like her!—First she thought of their keeping a little school, and now I hear she has fixed on the mantua-making, but I can't believe that, because she is so fond of Esther Humphries." "Do you know, Betty, if any particular misfortune has happened to Mr. Jennings?" "No, Sir, nothing that I do know of, except the disappointment about Mr. Joseph." "Why, I never heard you talk so foolishly; my poor brother could only have married one, and such a marriage could have been no great advantage even to *that* one. Poor things! I hope whatever their father sees right they will do willingly, for Mr. Jennings appears to me, though a blunt man, to have plain good sense. I have heard he is a fond father, but that he never indulged them so foolishly as Mrs. Jennings."

“ I believe, Sir, that’s quite true ; mothers, you know, are apt to make much of their girls, but Mr. Jennings have done his part in setting them up ; he was always very proud of their riding, Sir, and, to say true, when they did get on horseback, tall, thin girls as they were and well made too, I must own they did look creditable ; dear me, why they’d join the hunt, and there was a time when it was talk’d of all over the country that their own Squire thought of making Miss Louisa the lady of the manor, and while that was the report, not one of them would speak to a neighbour if they met them, and every body said they were getting ready to ride in their coaches ; I happened to go once to beg a little barn of the servant girl, and Mr. Henry muttered, while I stood there,—‘ Well, Miss Louisa, I shall expect the farm a good pennyworth.’ Miss Louisa toss’d her head, ‘ Indeed ! what are *we* to live upon.’ ”

“ There’s one thing, said Michael, Betty, I wish we could leave off, talking of our neighbours.”

“ I do assure you, Sir, I never speak of ’em but to you.” “ Well, Betty, we wish them no ill.” “ No, indeed, master ; I’d go by night or by day if I could do ’em a service.”

Betty passed on to her business, and

her master being anxious about sowing, strayed into the porch to look at the sunset; it was rather cloudy, and he saw some one approaching, whom, he could not clearly discern: who seemed to walk thoughtfully and leisurely, and he doubted whether he were coming to the Brow or passing. So, instead of going in, he waited, and as the person drew nearer, he heard a voice—it was James Brown.

Michael. O, James, is it you?

James. Were you at market yesterday?

Michael. No.

James. Well, I was, and I heard a piece of news there, as I think you'll be sorry for.

Michael. What was that?

James. You knew, perhaps, that Robert was come from transportation; he has not been home above two months, and now they have been making inquiry after the murderers of the old pedlar; and there is a man in that gang of gypsies that they think had a principal hand in it, and he has impeached Robert. Now, though he is an idle profligate chap, I believe he is as innocent of that murder as I am; and I thought perhaps, if I went up, I might do some good, for it is a hard thing for him to lose his life, and I wanted to consult you

how I am to go about it. I think I could prove that Robert was all the evening with me in the tent, the night that pedlar was murdered ; and bad as that gang were, I do not believe there was one there that would have stained their hands.

Michael. I think you are very right, James, in your anxiety for the welfare of this poor creature. The first thing to be done, is to see Robert, and to learn from him all the particulars of the crime for which he stands charged ; he is a perverse temper, and you will perhaps find it difficult to get any thing out of him—suppose I were to go with you ?

James. That's the very thing I wished, and yet I did not like to ask you.

The day was fixed, and these good young men set off together on this errand of mercy. The very precincts of a prison, especially that part occupied by felons, is appalling to a virtuous mind ; there, human hope seems extinguished, and certainty of the darkest kind has fixed her seat on every mind ; the blank look of despair, in its varied forms, is on every countenance ; the clanking of chains, and the noise of oaths and curses, assails your ear ; the maniac laugh of those who brave it to the last, the sullen determined silence of others, and the unavailing contrition of a few, present a

variety of ideas to the mind: still they are all of one hue, and that deeply depressing!

When our young men reached the prison, they presented a letter from Mr. Lascelles to the chaplain; he read it, and said, "I hope you are not too late; I will do my best in this service, but it is much to be regretted you had not come here sooner."

Michael. I never heard of it till very lately, and I believe James Brown did not know it till late last week.

Chaplain. He is under sentence of death, and by what I understand of his conduct, on trial, he is a villain of a hardened kind, and when I have conversed with him there seems to be nothing like contrition, and no anxiety expressed. I question if he will thank you for your efforts.

"Sir," said Jem Brown, "we do not want thanks; think of his soul, Sir, think of his never-dying soul."

Chaplain. Very true, Sir; you will be so good as to give my compliments to Mr. Lascelles, and I wish you a very good morning.—Turn down that passage, and inquire for the turnkey.

Michael. Shall we call again at your house, Sir, for an answer to that letter?

Chaplain. Here is little to answer, Sir:

Mr. Lascelles seems to know scarce any thing of this bad man. You can inform Mr. L. (if you please) that I have called upon him in his cell, and that he is resolutely silent.

The chaplain left them, and they turned down the dark passage, and found that it terminated in a room, small indeed, with a strong door which led to the condemned cells; at this they rapped, and a sturdy boy asked what they wanted. "We want the turnkey." He appeared. "We wish to see one Robert Sawyer."

Turnkey. Is he a relation of your's?

Michael. No, Sir, he is an old fellow-servant of ours, and we thought it kind just to call upon him in his trouble.

Turnkey. Why, Sir, I don't think he'll thank you for your kindness, he is the most hardened desperate villain I ever saw.

They began to hesitate, particularly Michael, for he hated wicked persons, though his heart yearned over every soul. He turned to James, and said, "We need not stop long," and the turnkey led to the cell: he was alone, and the darkness of the place increased their horror; they could dimly perceive the form of a figure stretched on the straw. James had privately begged the turnkey not to leave them, for he was really afraid of Robert, though he had

earnestly wished to visit him. Michael began: "Robert, do you remember me, my name is Michael Kemp; and here is James Brown; and we are come to visit you, and, if possible, to give you some comfort." To this he made no reply, and Michael again endeavoured, "We are truly sorry for your situation; but I hope, Robert, that you will spend your remaining time in penitence and prayer." Robert was chewing tobacco, and he spit out of his mouth at the word penitence, but made no reply.

James Brown said, "Do you not remember us?" (This roused the sturdy villain.)

Robert. Yes, yes, I remember ye; I should never have been here, if it had not been for you. We were all happy enough in the camp till *you* came; 'twas you and that canting methodist brought me here—that parson Lascelles.

Michael. O, Robert! that is indeed very unjust; your own robberies sent you to Botany Bay, and from that time we have never heard any thing of you. But Mr. Lascelles has great concern for your soul, Robert: it is by his desire that we deliver you the following message—"Tell that poor unhappy man to turn to God with all his heart, for there is mercy for the vilest; the Lord's compassion is not slow, his ear

is not heavy, therefore he says, ‘Return unto me, oh ye children. and I will return unto you.’ Robert remained sullenly silent; and Michael, finding there was no hope either of making him listen or speak, turned to quit the prison, giving him half a crown, which he took with the voracious eagerness of a hungry dog; and what sensations of gratitude they felt, as they quitted this deep dungeon, that they had never been left to commit sin with impunity, may be easily conceived by those who have visited such scenes of misery and distress; and how welcome did the clear blue azure of heaven appear as they passed from the dark walls. “Did you ever see a creature so altered,” said Michael. “What an object has vice made of him! At first the darkness was so great, I could scarcely perceive him, and when I did see him I could scarcely remember his features—so red and bloated; and what a spirit is in him; he is a horrid creature, I never heard such oaths and curses! I hope I shall soon forget them.”

James. I fear we had not patience enough; I think we might have staid a little longer.

Michael. If I had imagined that we could have done the slightest good I would have continued, but his hardness is impene-

trable, at least by us; and I really felt so very uncomfortable, having never been in such company, that I was glad to escape; though if Mr. Lascelles should think it right, I'll go again.—As they mounted their horses to return home, one of the people of the inn came out to say, that there had been inquiry made for Mr. Kemp, and orders left that he should return home as soon as possible. He was greatly alarmed, and he began to fear, he knew not what: his imagination fancied the illness of his sister, the death of her boy, and many painful things. It was his habit to ride very easily home, neither to hurry his beast nor himself; and when alone, to contemplate the goodness of God as he rode upon the green turf beside the highway; but now every thing which was distressing pressed upon him; nevertheless he recalled all the comforting texts he could think of, and repeated slowly to himself, “Return unto thy rest, O my soul! for the Lord hath regarded thee.” He dwelt with firm faith upon this assurance, and passed on his way. At length he reached the Brow. “O, Sir,” said Betty Smith, “I be so glad you are come; we’ve done all we could, but we could not save her. William and I have drenched her.” If the reader has ever felt an invincible dread of some unknown calamity,

and found it nothing in comparison with his fears, he can form an idea of Michael's feelings at the word drenched; he understood immediately that it was some of the cattle, and was so relieved that he almost cried for joy. Betty Smith was greatly surprised to see her master so contented, and said, "It was the red cow, Sir; that nice creature, that Yorkshire cow, Sir." William stood at the door, hardly daring to venture in. "Come in," said Michael. "I be mighty sorry, Sir." Michael had by this time recovered from his alarm, and from his opposite feeling of delight when he found that alarm groundless, he was now in a tranquil state, prepared to hear whatever they had to communicate. He did not choose to make too light of the affair, because he had ordered William to remove the cow out of the field, that was too rich for her, and he determined to ascertain whether his order had been obeyed. "You removed the cow out of the ground when I ordered you, William?" William looked very oddly. "Master, I had a strong temptation."—"I do not understand you, William."—"I had a strong temptation to move her."—"And why did you not move her, then?"—"Oh, but I mean, master, when I saw she was bad, when I saw she would die, I thought you'd be an-

gry, I got her by the fore-legs, and as there was nobody by, I was going to bring her into the home close and so down the straw-yard, and to lay her quietly, just as if she had died there; 'but,' says I to myself, 'that would be committing two sins: the first, disobedience to master's orders; next, the hiding it to deceive him, which would be a kind of a lie; and this I can't fancy, though to be sure it could not hurt any body.'" Michael was much pleased with this instance of growing principle in William, and observed, "You see, William, how naturally one sin leads to another: it is rare to find any one stopping at the first step, and this makes the first step very important."

William. Why, master, I see that clearly, and I hope I have learned a lesson; I do think that you never shall again tell me twice to do a thing, and I'm very willing that you should stop my wages until the cow is paid for.

Michael. We will think about this, William; I must say, that in my judgment, when a servant breaks carelessly, or destroys in any way the property of his master, he has a right to make it good; and if this practice were generally followed, we should find servants far more careful and thoughtful; and even if a master chose to

return it, I think the practice of making careless people feel their own negligence would be a good one.

As Betty stood laying the cloth for her master's dinner, she asked him if he had heard that there was to be a sale at Sizors.

Michael. No indeed, Betty, and I hope it is not true.

Betty. Why, Sir, if Farmer Jennings could get his money together, his children out, he and Mrs. might do very well, and 'tis a hard thing for the poor father and mother to go on slaving to support idleness and pride; and I do believe that they would all be happier to find their own hands.

Michael. It may be so, Betty; but I suppose there would be some difficulty in placing out so large a family, but I understand they have kind friends in Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles. I am sorry that it is not in my power to be of any use; it is a great privilege to have an opportunity of being useful; to consider every human being as a member of Christ, to endeavour to show our love to him continually, in feeding the hungry, clothing the distressed, soothing the mind of the afflicted, and doing all in love to him, keeps up a spirit of the recollection of what he hath done for us, and points our hopes and wishes to that true centre.

Betty. Yes, Sir, this is all true and comfortable.

Michael. Let us endeavour to be guided by it (my faithful Betty); and except with some intention of this sort, we will speak no more of Sizors.—Betty went out, for she perceived she had gone too far, and Michael permitted the silent reproof to operate.—Let us return to P.

Mr. Walker, whose kind heart watched with care over every being in his parish, did not see with indifference the return of Joe; he judged that there must be some cause why such a brother as Michael should resign the charge he once adopted; and when, on inquiry, he found that the opening at home was likely to supply permanent employment, he asked no farther, so that Joe's indiscretions were unknown at P., and the fair character he maintained was perhaps the only thing that could have kept him steady, for the breath of human praise was life to Joseph; and we find in this, as in many other cases, even vices, in contradistinction to each other, are found to keep up outward decency, it is only the wisdom which cometh from above that is first pure.

Jane, the steady Jane was house-maid at Mr. W.'s, and as she called on her mother one morning, she said, "Mother, I

know you'll be concerned to hear what my fellow-servants told me this morning. Mrs. Potter is in a bad way, her goods are taken to —, and she drinks so very sadly, that they think she cannot last long. They say, it is distress that has brought her to it, but I cannot understand that, mother."

Mrs. Kemp. My dear, when people do go for comfort to any but the Lord, it will be commonly found to fail them. You see this poor woman has been distressed, she has wished to forget her care, but she could not; and finding that when she took more than nature required, it made her forget sorrow, she has gone on till sin no longer sought concealment, but openly exposed her to the derision of her neighbours. It is remarkable how little pity one poor sinner has for another; I think I shall call upon her, and see if I can be any comfort to her.

Jane. Do, mother, perhaps you might persuade her to give up her bad ways.

(Elizabeth Kemp shook her head.)
"In this and every case, Jane, I would say, In the Lord put I my trust."

Now Elizabeth Kemp was reflecting in her mind what might be the best means to bring about the best end. It was very long since she had seen Mrs. Potter, for she was

confined to her house by duty and inclination. It was no time to hesitate, so she went over the way, and found her as Jane had described, some people in possession, and others marking the goods for sale. Some few customers still drinking, one of them drank, "Mrs. Kemp, your health Ma'am, and your family," and then the others burst into a loud laugh. The worthy creature lifted up her heart to God for them; and was searching in vain for Mrs. Potter; when one of the legal men, seeing her decent appearance, rightly concluded that she did not belong to that house in any way, and told her Mrs. Potter was not well, and he did not know whether she was up. A decent looking servant-girl just then came in, and Mrs. Kemp sent up a message to inquire if there was any thing she could do that would be of any use; and an answer was returned, to desire her to walk up stairs.

There was, in Mrs. P.'s mind, a quality not uncommon to those who plunge themselves into difficulties by irregularity and intemperance; the slightest gleam of hope encourages inordinate expectation, and though Mrs. Potter well knew Elizabeth Kemp had little in her own power, she knew she had influence, and she determined to ask her to use it. So she received her visitor with unusual cordiality, calling her Mrs. Kemp, and begging she

would be seated. There was every appearance of plenty in the apartment, but it was neglected,—sluttish plenty, and was exactly descriptive of the true state of things. The head of the house was not in possession of her right reason scarcely any night in the week; and the morning found her languid and miserable.

“ Oh, Mrs. Kemp,” said she, “ you see I’m come to misfortune. Who would have thought that I, who have always been a good neighbour and done my duty, should come to distress; but you are a kind creature, neighbour Kemp, and ye seem sent on purpose. If you will just step down to Mr. Walker, and give my duty to him, and say, if he would be so good as to lend me sixty pounds to pay the distiller, I should go on very well. Elizabeth Kemp was astonished! “ Indeed, Mrs. Potter, I could not ask such a favour of the Reverend Mr. Walker: sixty pounds is a great deal of money, and I really do not think he would lend it you.”—“ Then what am I to do? I do not know that I have a friend in the world, and here all my goods are going to be sold to satisfy the creditors. I had no more notion of this, Mrs. Kemp, three days ago, no more than you have. Perhaps your son, the rich young farmer, could just step in; you know, time has been I was a friend to you, Mrs. Kemp.”

Elizabeth Kemp replied, she did not forget it, and that she would very willingly return that favour doubled, but that it did not seem to be of much use. "Oh, no! people that have been in a great way like me," said Mrs. Potter, "'tisin't a few shillings will put their affairs to rights." Elizabeth Kemp was thanking God in her heart that she never had been in a great way as Mrs. Potter called it; that God had been pleased to keep her in a safe and lowly path. She began to despair of doing any good; but she proposed, if Mrs. Potter wished it, to go to the rectory and ask Mr. Walker to call on her. In reply to this offer, she said she did not know what to think; that she should not like to be schooled and taught at her time of life.

Elizabeth Kemp stood hesitating, for she really knew not what to do. Mrs. P., in the same uncertain state, at last determined. "Well, there can be no harm in just asking Mr. W. to step down." So Elizabeth set off on her neighbourly visit to the rectory. It was long since she had called there; for though she attended regularly Mr. Walker's public and private instructions, she was not, like the relations of some servants, intruding in the family where her daughter resided; but she took this opportunity of thanking the higher servants in the family, for the kind instruc-

tions they had given Jane, and for their patience with her youth and inexperience. Margaret, the head maid, said, Jane was a towardly girl; "and there's one thing I like about her, Mrs. Kemp, she has got the wit to hold her tongue; and when she sees me cross, and I don't think I'm the *best* of tempers, she never stands to argufy."

At this moment Jane came into the kitchen. "Oh, mother, nothing the matter, I hope."—"No, little maid, nothing at all; I'm only come to wait on your master, on a message from Mrs. Potter. Though nobody answered, she could hear a whisper of "Mrs. P., Mrs. P., Mrs. P.;" and Margaret came up, "Oh, I hear Mrs. Potter is in a bad case."

Mrs. Kemp. Yes, there's distress there.

Margaret (smiling.) Distress of her own making.

Mrs. Kemp. True, yet a public-house is a sad temptation.

Margaret. I cannot see that, Mrs. Kemp; if a public-house is well conducted, I can't see why it should not be a very decent sober place. My father kept a public-house down at Dover, and he went by the name of the Honest Man at the Crown; and when the sailors would ask for more than was good for them, he would never let them have it. The tap-room did not join the house, that was a great conve-

nience. Our house was locked up at ten o'clock, and not one drop of liquor was drawn after that hour. He sold his beer cheaper than any house in Dover, but he kept no score; and often have I been sent to a family to let them know that they had better fetch home their master on some pretence or other, and then if the customers were angry, they were sure to have some kind turn done them by my father, so that it did not last long; and my mother was a very nice cook, and when people were ill, many a little dinner would she send under a tin cover.

How useful a poor person may be if they are but disposed. Its no uncommon thing to hear the poor declare that they have no power of doing good, whereas, while they have their health and strength and spirits, no persons are more capable. The study bell rang, and Mrs. Kemp was admitted to speak to Mr. Walker. He met her with that kind and cordial consideration which he ever appeared to feel for the Kemp family. "I'm glad to see you looking so well; how is your husband, your children, your good son, Michael?" "All well, Sir, many thanks to you." "And what may be your present business with me?" "I hardly know, Sir, how to tell you; but I think I had better mention all that has been said to me. I went this morn-

ing to call on Mrs. Potter at the Lion, because I heard she was in some distress, and you remember, Sir, she was once so good as to lend me five shillings, and it was doing me a very kind turn, and I do not wish to forget it, and she now is in great distress, and the only way I can help her is to name it to you; but she wants so much more than I can do for her, that it is quite out of my power to do her any other service. She wants to borrow money, Sir, and you well know I have none to lend, she talks of sixty pounds."

Mr. W. (smiling.) For my part, my good woman, I would sooner give sixty pounds to put a public house down, than to set it up again. You may tell Mrs. Potter I'll call on her; but lest she should suppose I am coming with the money, you may tell her that I have no present sum in my disposal.

Mrs. Kemp departed on her unwelcome errand, and Mrs. P. received her, as might be expected. She had heard a great deal of the reverend's charities, for her part she had never tried him before, and now it was a clear case, he had no mind to show her favour. Well, a friend in need is a friend indeed. I'm the less obliged to him. I can't cant and whine and talk about what I do not understand, that is the way to the reverend's

heart I suppose. And now forgetting her sorrow in her spleen, "I suppose, Mrs. Kemp, you've had some pleasant talk this morning. I dare say the reverend said, I had brought my misfortunes upon myself. No, no, taxes and tithes and supervisors, oh, its enough to ruin any body." All this time poor Mrs. Kemp was standing in a fidgetty uneasiness, not knowing whether to go or to stay, the maid came in for her mistress's keys.

Mrs. Potter. My keys indeed, what before I'm dead?

Maid. Yes, Ma'am, the man says he must have them.

"What, is he going to pull all my papers about, and nobody knows how, please to give my service, and I should wish to keep my own keys." Here E. Kemp's natural good sense and kindness of heart induced her to offer her advice, "I think, Mrs. Potter, you had better let him have them; I think he can demand them by law, and perhaps it might make him uncivil." "Oh, its an easy matter for you, Mrs. Kemp, who don't know what it is to have affairs of consequence to lock up; it is an easy thing for you, I say, to talk of giving up keys; but my papers, all my accounts, all my private letters. My poor dear Mr. Potter's that is dead and gone." (Here Elizabeth Kemp looked involuntarily,

Mr. Potter was a common ostler, and could neither read nor write.) Mrs. Potter understood the look, and it increased her spleen; and she said, "people that could do no good, might as well take themselves away, and that for her part, she was sick of the world, more especially religious people; she had never had much to do with them, she pretty well knew what they were before she tried them!"

Poor Elizabeth Kemp was just departing as the maid returned, ushering in Mr. Walker. Mrs. Potter's face was become the prominent seat of envy and ill-temper, and she could not alter her countenance in a moment, this glance was useful to Mr. W., as it showed him the tone in which she ought to be addressed, "Well, Madam, I am come to offer you any advice in my power, and if I can be of any use to you, though I do not offer you money, still, I shall most gladly serve you in any other way, especially if you mean to give up this house, for we have too many public houses in this village, and though they are not open on Sundays, yet persons are admitted, and while that is the case, the reformation of the poor is greatly impeded. Well, now, Mrs. Potter, what are your future plans?" "My plan, Sir," said Mrs. P. tossing her head, "is to pay Mr. Poole the distiller, if I could have got

the money." "Well, Madam, if you can, you are certainly the best judge of your own affairs; as the clergyman of this village, it is my duty to visit every one in distress, for distress sometimes brings thought and inquiry." Mrs. P. replied, "that as for thought, she had always had plenty of that, nobody could say but she'd always been thoughtful and careful." "I was going to say, Mrs. Potter," said Mr. Walker, "how very thoughtless and how very careless you have always been, you have lived without God in the world; I have never seen you at the church above twice since I married you; and with regard to the distiller's bill, I acquit my conscience, in saying, *you* have had but too large a share in it. No, stop, I am going on as your pastor. I am vested with authority from a power you have hitherto despised, but observe me, though unseen, he is irresistible; and I warn you, that your present course of life will not end in temporal ruin, it is full of eternal danger. I'm told by those who well know your habits, that you're rarely to be spoken with after three o'clock in the day, this is sad work, but he who commissions me to warn you, commissions me to encourage you if you break off your sins by right-

eousness, and your iniquities by calling upon your God."

Mrs. P.'s patience had been sorely tried, she was endeavouring to speak repeatedly, but Mr. W. kept his post firm, and his eye fixed, and never ceased till he had ended all he meant to say, and then the storm broke out. "Was this the way that one Christian should speak to another? Was this the way to comfort people in their affliction? For her part, she never had much notion of the Methodists, she never had asked any favours of them, she never did expect much from them, and blessed was them as expected nothing, they should not be disappointed." She ran on in a long stream of abuse. Mr. Walker stood the pelting of the storm like a fine old castle, whose buttresses stand firm, unshaken by the blast; the howling of the winds and the fury of the tempest passes by, and it stands against the smiling sky in reverend majesty: so waited Mr. Walker, till Mrs. Potter's fury spent, a shower of tears, and a sort of hysterical scream subsided into sobs and moanings; still patient, he waited till her passion being entirely exhausted, she sat like a froward child, not knowing what to do, or what to say.

He still continued to look with a kind-

ness of heart, and something like hope, which arose from this cause, that she appeared, now the heat of passion was over, ashamed and uneasy. He said, "Well, Madam, have you any plan? are you determined to remain here?" Mrs. P. replied, "that she did not know what she should do, that she had no money, and that though she had some debts owing to her, and a pretty deal too, considering she was in but a moderate way of business, and did not commonly lodge people, that she was noted for cookery, and if she could but once be established again, her ordinary would be the best in P——."

Mr. W. remained silent, he was determined if he could not put the house down, he would not assist to continue it. Poor E. Kemp had stood looking out of the window for some time. She could not offer to go, lest it should look unkind, and yet knew not any thing that she could do or say. At length turning round, "Mrs. Potter, Ma'am, if you want any thing that I can do, if you'll be so good to send to me, I will wait upon you directly." "Thank you, Elizabeth Kemp, if I should go away, I shall want help in packing a little, and may be you could assist me in that?" "Oh, I don't doubt but I could, Ma'am," and Elizabeth, with

a respectful good morning to Mr. W., withdrew.

It was Mr. W.'s presence alone that had restrained the people from again demanding the keys, and when they saw him passing through the house, the person who was put in possession, came up to him, "Sir, it's not my wish to be hard-hearted when people are in misfortunes; but its very provoking to be stopped in the way of one's duty by ignorance and foolish obstinacy; we cannot get the keys from the lady above stairs, you know, Sir, this is law?" "Yes, I do;" he stepped back again, and tapping at the door, "Mrs. Potter, it is a customary form to give up your keys at such times as these, and your resisting it will only plunge you in deeper inconvenience, give them to me and I will stand by while your desk is examined, and bring you them again when the search is over."

Who would suppose that after all this resistance, that when the desk was laid open, it should contain nothing of value. The first thing was an old cap with the caul nearly burnt out, and a piece of front hair pinned to it, some bits of soap, two or three snaffles of thread, a bottle of hartshorn, four or five old stockings, a few sheets of paper, and some old pens, a

cookery book without a cover, very greasy and dirty; and in different parts of the desk, several bills without receipts, two or three old torn letters, a few wafers, four or five lottery tickets; three or four pair of old ear-rings in a snuff-box; a watchcase and an old chain, some curtain rings, a hammer, and a few rusty keys; a housewife, with scarcely any article of use in it, a pair of scissors, and a pair of sugar-nippers, some scales for weighing, quite out of repair, and the weights throwing about the desk, a broken tea-spoon, and a pair of snuffers; there was a well in the desk, which went with a spring, and here the man expected to find some treasure, but indeed such a confusion as here presented itself, is beyond my powers of description; a mixture of every sort of rag, corn plaister in abundance, matches, old lavender water bottles, a broken small tooth comb; and now came a packet of papers tied up, these were opened, there were three or four letters, written in characters as unintelligible as Egyptian records, many bills, an old pocket book, very greasy and dirty, when opened, it was found to contain several pieces of hair, and rolled up in one corner were two five pound notes, which it is supposed the poor

lady, in the frequency of her intoxication, had totally forgotten.

All the bills were collected, and the amount was very trifling; Mr. Walker, whose soul was under the law of kindness, stood with his pencil in his hand, "Well, Sir, and what do you suppose the debts may amount to?" "Why, Sir, I do not think so much as was thought at first; Mrs. Potter has not been an extravagant woman, nor was she given to drinking, till she had that disappointment about her uncle's will." "What was that?" "Why, Sir, did you never hear?" "No, never." "Well, then, I must tell you, she is right heir to more than twenty thousand pounds." "Indeed!" "Yes, indeed! a housekeeper that lived with the old gentleman, (he was a tobacconist in London,) got the will made again all in favour of her relations; and poor Mrs. Potter happening to call on her uncle on his dying bed rather too much dressed, he felt assured his money would all be spent foolishly, and he would hearken to none but this artful old housekeeper; but if Mrs. Potter had money for law, I think she might get her right, for the lawyer that made the will did not like it, and kept saying, but, Sir, you have a niece; she

don't want it, Sir, said he, she don't want it, this is my last will." Mr. Walker paused, "You are sure this statement is quite correct?" "I tell it you just as I heard it, and I think they as told me, knew pretty well the truth of the case." *Mr. W.* "Well, Sir, now I suppose I may deliver these keys to the lady above stairs?" "Oh yes, Sir."

"Well, Madam," said Mr. W. as he entered, "here are your keys, and if you have any money anywhere, it seems that your affairs are not in so very bad a state, but that you might get them settled comfortably." "Sir, that's what I say; I know I don't owe any body but the distiller, and some trifles beside." "Now really, Mrs. Potter, I wish to speak to you as one of my flock; if your affairs could be decently settled, and you could go into a small house and live as a prudent woman should, out of the way of spirituous liquors, you might lose these bad habits, and become a valuable member of this place." Mrs. Potter said, "she had no money to pay the distiller, and that she must go on in the way of life that she had been bred to," and her reverend friend withdrew, finding all attempts only fixed her more firmly in the design of staying.

But he could not help reflecting on what he had heard, and such was his love of justice, that he would gladly have spent something of his own private fortune to have reinstated Mrs. Potter. But the affair seemed hopeless, it was so long since the death of the uncle.

When he sat down to converse with Mrs. Walker, she was of opinion that something might be done. "My love," said she, "if we could get this foolish woman into a private house, much that is now wrong would probably be corrected: do let us try. I should think there are many professional men who would have pleasure in helping such a case."

Mr. W. Without money, Sophia?

Mrs. W. (laughing) Not without the hope of money.

Mr. W. Well, my dear, can you find any one who will with the hope of money undertake Mrs. Potter's cause?

Mrs. W. I think I can.

Mr. W. Well, you must hold high councils with Mrs. Potter. But I would do nothing till I had cured her of her propensities; if you do, you only furnish her with an opportunity of more effectually destroying her constitution: and, besides, let me tell you, I think conscience the best lawyer:

and as I'm going to London next week, if Mrs. P. could furnish me with this woman's address, I would pay her a visit, and take Protheroe with me, he might use a few fine law terms, and without spending any money we might bring her to do justice.

Mrs. W. This is an excellent plot. I should exceedingly enjoy such a scene.

We will pass the interview between Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Potter, and touch only what is material to the history—the friendly offices of the good Rector of P.

Mrs. Tucker, the tobacconist's house-keeper, was quietly established at a neat little highway-side villa at Walworth, where the stage could take her up and put her down at her own door; and a few mornings after his arrival in London, the friend of the oppressed widow rang at the neat gate of a small house. A little girl came to it. "Is Mrs. Tucker at home?"—"Sir?" "Is Mrs. Tucker at home?" A grave old citizen, who was standing at his door, came out, in a well-mended bannian and a velvet cap, and bowing very respectfully to Mr. Walker and Mr. Protheroe Walker, asked for whom they inquired.—"For Mrs. Tucker, Sir."—"You are at the wrong number; it is No. 1, not 21, you should have called at. But if you will just step in while I slip off my morning dress (look-

ing archly at his gown), I will lead you to the lady you seek.”—“ Thank you, Sir. Will you be so very obliging as to give me your name ?” “ My name, Sir, is Brownrigg ; and (looking up at Mr. Walker) perhaps—and ere he continued Mr. W. said “ Mine is Walker, and this is my nephew, Mr. Protheroe Walker of Lincoln’s Inn.”

Mr. Brownrigg buttoned himself up tight as though he would have shunned all intercourse with a lawyer, and seemed about to settle into a reserve which was very unlike his first cordiality ; but his curiosity was too much for him ; and while he looked for his cane and his well-mended gloves, and put the guard on his fire, and hung up his kettle-holder, and locked his bright bureau, he hemmed and coughed, and at last “ You have business with Mrs. Tucker, Mr. Walker ?” — “ Yes, Sir. You know Mrs. Tucker ?” — “ Yes, Sir, I have known her many years.” — “ She is a respectable woman, is she not ?” said Mr. Walker. “ Yes, Sir, a very decent, respectable woman.” — “ She is rich, I believe ?” — “ Why, Sir, all riches are comparative, you know : I am called a rich man because I live upon my means, and can say I owe no man any thing ; and yet, Sir, if you look at my opposite neighbour, he is richer still. There, Sir, you see his footman has banged to

the carriage-door—and there go his prancing horses. Why, now, I remember when that man swept his own shop. He is an honest fellow—he has got on by fair trading—he has brought up a large family very decently—no man envies him—he never refused a good turn in his life—he is an honest man, Sir; that man's an honest man——But I keep you waiting, gentlemen, I am quite ready,” and he was leading the way to the passage, “but, gentlemen,” said he, hesitating, “I should be very sorry to do a neighbour an ill turn; I hope there is no harm intended to Mrs. Tucker?”—“Sir,” said Mr. Walker, “if Mrs. Tucker has done no wrong, she is safe; and if she has done wrong, I am sure you are too much a gentleman and a man of honour”—and here Mr. Brownrigg laughed—“I say, Sir, you are too much a gentleman,” repeated Mr. Walker, “to enlist on the wrong side.”

Mr. Protheroe Walker looked at his uncle as though he would have said, softly, softly. Mr. Brownrigg had the door in his hand at this moment, but he closed it again. “Gentlemen, will you step back a minute—will you sit down?” Mr. Protheroe Walker said, “Certainly, Sir,” and stepped back with him immediately. “You seem to know our business?” The wary

Mr. Brownrigg bowed ; “ You come from the village of P——, I presume, Sir ; you come from Mrs. Potter, Sir ? ” “ I do not come from Mrs. Potter, Sir ; I never saw her ; but that gentleman, (looking at Mr. Walker,) that gentleman knows Mrs. Potter certainly : and now, Sir, for I hate mysteries, I wish a sight of the late Mr. Wilson’s will.”—“ So I thought,” said Mr. Brownrigg, putting his finger very knowingly to the side of his nose ; “ and I must say, Sir, I think the friends of Mrs. Potter have a right to this satisfaction.”—“ As the minister of the parish, Sir, I consider myself the friend of every being in it.”—“ Excellent, Sir, excellent ; that’s just what I think every parson should do, though I can’t say, Sir, its exactly what they do do.” “ But now to the point,” said Mr. Walker, breaking through his unwilling restraint, “ how was it that Mr. Wilson died without leaving a shilling to his nearest relation ? Do you think it was all fair play, Sir ? ”

Mr. B. Sir, I knew Mr. Wilson as well as I knew my own brother, and if his niece had gone on to his liking, he would never have overlooked her ; but, Sir, she was an extravagant woman.

Mr. W. I believe not, Sir.

Mr. B. Well, Sir, I have heard her uncle say so. He worked for every shilling of

money he had, and Mrs. Tucker, his old housekeeper, helped him to save it. Mrs. Potter used to come to town now and then, and give herself great airs, and treat the poor old hard working woman as if she was not worthy to wipe her shoes. You may well think this was not very pleasant, and her uncle was more affronted at it than Mrs. Tucker herself: he gave her no warning, but he often said to me, ‘Ah, she’ll smart for it one day.’ I do not believe my neighbour ever went out of her way to do Mrs. Potter an injury; but she could not be blamed for taking what her master gave her.

Mr. W. No, if she used no undue means to obtain it.

Mr. Brownrigg assured them he believed that Mrs. Tucker was innocent of that wrong, and could not be accused of one dishonest or unfair action. The Uncle and Nephew look’d at each other and seemed ready to give up farther inquiry, but as Mrs. Potter was in distress he thought the old housekeeper might be prevailed on to do an act of justice, or rather of kindness, and after musing a little, he said, “By the by, Sir, in what did the late Mr. Wilson’s property lie? was he a stock-holder, a landed proprietor, or——” “I believe, Sir, he had no money in the funds at all;

he rose in the world by very honest industry; he went on from £10 to 20, and traded till it doubled, and so added to his stock; as he increased his capital he brought up several boys and set them up in business, and took fair interest for his money. He had several houses in Smithfield and a very good house in Tower-street, he had a nursery garden at Chelsea which paid him very well; and it would be a difficult matter for any one to get hold of his property without Mrs. Tucker would tell where it lay, for she collected his money for many years, and, I believe, never wrong'd him; and I am sure not a tenant he had but respected her and would be grieved she should lose: and as for the boys he set up, why she has been a mother to them, work'd for them; and scarce a Sunday but some of them come down to see her." Mr. Protheroe Walker looked arch,—“that may not be time thrown away.”—“So the world say, but I think all Mrs. Tucker's affairs are settled; she has some good advisers, and, as I said, I do not think she cares to do any thing that is not right. You will be so good as to remember, Sir, she has had a good deal to bear from Mrs. Potter; when she came to London, this decent, respectable woman was never suffered to sit down to table with her, though

one table always served her and her master, and, to say truth, she was the genteeler person of the two; but this pert lady, when she came up to visit her uncle, even bought a bell (for her uncle did not sport such a thing) on purpose to ring in Mrs. Tucker. This gave a deadly blow, Mr. Wilson never got over it; a woman of her years, one who was in all his confidence, who had served him so long and so faithfully, to be insulted by such an upstart, such a whiff of tobacco!—it was monstrous, it shall never be again; No! No! let her give herself airs among her stable boys, she shall not do it here; and I believe the old man never saw her after; there was some talk of sending for her, but Mr. W. said he would not be disturbed. Two of his old apprentices used to sit up with him every night, and I really believe there is something left to them, but that I cannot say. But now, gentlemen, if you please we will walk;”—and he called up his little maid, “Peggy, you mind and lock the gate to keep out the vagrants, and when the man at the Bell brings the newspaper, you tell him to take it to Mr. Bowyers first, and I’ll have the next hour; and when the fishman comes,—” and here he finished buttoning his coat, and spoke low to Peggy.

They sallied out together, and the turn

in the road brought them to houses a little lower than those they had left, and at the first of these Mr. B. stopped. 'Twas a very pretty garden, in one blush of early flower, every thing about it was neat; there was a small porch, three steps down, under it to the kitchen. "Well, Sarah, is your mistress at home?" said the upright Mr. B. to a little head that peeped. "Yes, Sir;" and the little maid had just time to run in and let her mistress know that there was company, before she opened the door. It was quickly opened, so quickly that it was easy to perceive Mrs. Tucker making her escape, with her long grey hair over her shoulders, without a cap; Mr. B. could not repress a smile. They walked into the parlour; on the back of a chair hung a little cloth mob and a bit of curl'd black ribbon; and in two minutes Sarah opened the door to fetch out the article. In the interval between her exit and her mistress's entrance we will look round the room and see its furniture. Over the chimney-piece an old-fashioned chimney-glass, with two brass sconces, four coffee-cups and saucers, a little china pot for flowers, a small teakettle on the hob, a little tin pot, a high-back chair, such as Cowper says 'an alderman of Cripplegate contrived;' four rush-bottomed chairs, a very tall

book-case and desk through whose glass-doors you might see two plated candlesticks, a few silver spoons, eight or nine well-worn books, some table linen, some wine-glasses, two or three curious twisted pipes, a snuff-box, a leaden tobacco-box and many other minuter articles; the scotch carpet had been well worn and well darned, and wherever the foot was likely to tread frequently was a little bit of canvass; but every thing bore the marks of the most exquisite neatness, and her flowers bloomed in rich beauty in both the windows; the several tables about the apartment shone beautifully. A little gentle pit-pat step told the approach of Mrs. Tucker; her little fresh-coloured face bloomed higher as she looked inquiringly at Mr. Walker and his nephew. Mr. B. had been standing upright with his hands behind him, and he put out one to his neighbour,—“ Good morning, Mrs. Tucker.” She returned the salute with cordiality, and Mr. Walker, from all he had heard and all he saw, began to be sorry that he had enlisted in such a cause.

Mr. W. We have called on you, madam, from Mrs. Potter of P——; she thinks herself hardly done by that she should receive nothing from her late uncle's effects.

Mrs. T. Nothing, Sir! I paid her £200,

which I said her uncle left her for mourning; because I wished not to have any thing to do with her.

Mr. W. But, madam, Mrs. Potter is the late Mr. Wilson's nearest relative, and she intends entering a *caveat* against the last disposition of his effects; did you administer?

Mrs. T. Yes, Sir, I did, and did every thing regularly; I was left sole executrix, and residuary legatee; and the will was regularly signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of three witnesses.

Mr. P. Walker rose from his chair, his uncle continued sitting.—“ Well, madam, and this £200 is all Mrs. Potter is to receive from the large effects of her uncle?” Mrs. Tucker said it was £200 more than her uncle left, for he, truly speaking, left her nothing; he did not like her behaviour, and he never liked her employment; she was brought up a mantua-maker, but she liked better to be idling about the inn-yard, and her uncle said he did not think it was a decent life for a young woman, and that his money should never go there. “ Had Mr. Wilson no other relatives, madam?” “ I believe not, Sir.” “ Well, madam, Mrs. Potter is now in great distress, and you have more money than you know what to do with.” Mrs. T. shook her head; she

said, if she thought Mrs. Potter was really in distress by any misfortune she would not stand against assisting her, but as to giving any part of the property to Mrs. P. as a right she never would do it. "Perhaps, madam," said Mr. Walker, "you will give her the same sum that you have already given." "No, Sir, I don't think I shall; all the property lies in yearly rents, and it's a sum I could not raise at once without asking favours. Pray, Sir, what has brought Mrs. Potter into distress? when she used to visit her uncle she spent money profusely, and I believe that was one reason, among many others, why Mr. Wilson passed her by. Her want of respect, Sir, to those older than herself was another mortal offence; she would frequently tell her uncle, 'he was past knowing,' and however far we may be advanced, we do not like such very plain dealing." "Well, madam, we must endeavour to forget the past, and when I tell you that there is an execution in the house of your master's niece, perhaps you may be disposed to show her some kindness for his sake." "Why, Sir, if there is real distress and I had it in my power to help her, though she has never treated me with common decency, I can say that I was always kind-hearted, and

I'm sure I would not refuse kindness here." "I suppose, madam," said Mr. W., "that Mrs. Potter wished to make a show when she came to London, but in her native village she has not the reputation of extravagance." Mrs. Tucker said she should think it going against her master's will to set up Mrs. Potter in a public-house, it was always a great offence to him. "Perhaps, neighbour," said Mr. Brownrigg, "you might send her £20." Mrs. Tucker's good-natured eyes twinkled,— "Yes I might, to be sure, but what is it to do, Sir?"

Mr. W. It is to pay the distiller.

Mrs. T. No, Sir, I shall not do that; I have heard that Mrs. P. drinks a good deal herself, and whatever my master would have done, if he was alive, as near as I can, I'll do the same. You know, Mr. Brownrigg, I have never lived extravagant; I never kept any girl but Sarah, and there is nothing here that's wasted I can assure you. I think Mrs. P. had better be a bankrupt and begin life again, and when she's out of that house, if you'll let me know what will serve for a decent maintenance, I shall try to remember that she is akin to my poor dear master.

Mr. W. And, madam, instead of buying more land, and adding house to house and

field to field, you'll give a little of your surplus towards maintaining the niece of your master.

Mrs. T. Why, Sir, as for surplus, I never have bought a field or a house since my master died; he had his own plans, and there always was a blessing would follow his money, and I've gone on in the same way, Sir, helping the fair trader.

Mr. W. Madam, we ought to apologize for taking up so much of your time; what will you allow us to say to Mrs. Potter?

Mrs. T. Nothing from me, Sir, I never will have any thing to do with her; It's an old saying, 'a burnt child dreads the fire,' and I'm sure she's been my dread many, many years; she's an unhappy, discontented woman, and I could never find a good reason, I think, for putting my head in the lion's den. You seem, Sir, to be a friend to Mrs. Potter?

Here Protheroe Walker's quick eye glanced upon Mrs. T., and she felt the look; it seemed to say, 'my uncle, my venerable, excellent uncle, a friend to such a woman as this!' Mrs. T. felt this application as sensibly as though it had been audible, and she said, "I ask pardon, Sir, what would you wish me to do?" (and she opened a drawer in a table and took out a

bunch of keys, and putting on her spectacles, she turned over the keys one by one.) Mr. Walker, with his usual mildness and look of benevolence, replied that it was entirely unknown to Mrs. P. that he had called, that he should be obliged to Mrs. Tucker to show him the will of the deceased. “Sir, the probate is with a cousin of mine, a Mr. Wood, but you know you can read it for a shilling in the commons.” *Mr. W.* “I consider every being in my parish as entitled to a portion of my attention, but I think my friendship for Mrs. Potter goes no further.” And here Protheroe walked to the window and stretched himself to his full height, and seemed impatient to be gone; all this while Mrs. Tucker was turning over the keys as though she seemed uncertain which belonged to her desk, and the friendly Mr. Brownrigg, whose good sense had kept him silent, now came forward;--“My good Mrs. Tucker, had you not better tell this gentleman, who is the rector of P., and only the friend of the distressed,—had you not better tell him what you will do at once?” “Neighbour, you do know what I have suffered from that pert tongue of Mrs. Potter’s, I never knew a minute’s peace when she was in my master’s house.” Mr. B. said he knew this was very true. “Well, then, can you expect me to begin ac-

quaintance again? no, I do assure you that's what I sha'n't do." Mr. B. said, "I do not blame you. Could not I be of some use, Sir?" said he, turning to Mr. Walker, "I'm a very leisure man, and it would be a good turn to give me a job: suppose I undertake it, Mrs. Tucker?"

All this time Mr. Walker sat mildly, Protheroe fidgetted, and Mrs. T. kept colouring and shaking her little round head, and the tears found their way to her eyes as she thought of her past sorrows. "Well, Mr. Brownrigg, if you can secure me never to fix my eyes upon Mrs. Potter's face again——" (and she got up and went to her desk, and took out a twenty-pound-note)—"you shall have that sum every half-year. But, Sir," said she, turning to Mr. W., "I'm an old woman, and these flurries do me a deal of harm." Here Protheroe pulled out his watch, he said, "Uncle, I have an appointment at two, and it's now twelve." Mr. Brownrigg said, "I'll undertake it Mrs. Tucker; Sir, I'll undertake it." Mr. W. smiled benevolently, walked to the fire-place, put his hand to his forehead, and then turning round and bowing to Mrs. Tucker, "Madam, I think your offer a very generous one; I shall look at the will as you suggest, and I will communicate with Mr. Brownrigg, and as far

as my power goes you shall be secure from the visits of Mrs. Potter. We had better, I think, let matters go on as they are at present, and if she takes a small house in my village, your annual allowance will enable her to live comfortably, and," turning to Mr. Brownrigg, "if, Sir, as you're a leisure man, you have a mind to come to the village of P—— I shall have a bed at your service."

Mrs. Tucker's eyes began to glisten at the prospect of their departure, and she stood smoothing down her apron, carefully putting up her spectacles, and holding the £20 ready for any one who chose to take it. Mr. B. put out his hand, took the note, and wrote down in his tablets, 'I have, this 25th day of May, received of Mrs. Tucker £20 Bank of England, for the use of Mrs. Potter of P——.

JONATHAN BROWNRIGG.'

He tore out the leaf, "there, neighbour, that's your security against my spending the money." Mrs. T. gave him two gentle pats with her little fat hand and shook her head laughing; "Ah, Mr. B., I'm not afraid of you;" and they departed. They walked together till they were again at the door of Mr. B., and Peggy was unlocking the gate, for she had been on the watch for her master. The two Mr. W.'s were

making their bows; but good Mr. Brownrigg insisted they should come in, and Mr. W. having a word or two with his new agent, assented, notwithstanding Protheroe kept pressing him to remember his appointment at two. However, when they entered the parlour, they found that their provident friend, Mr. B. had a sufficient provision of oysters, French rolls, fresh butter, porter, red and white wine, on his little side-board; in fine, every thing that thoughtful hospitality could provide at so short a notice. They had really talked themselves hungry; and, though Protheroe had an appointment at two o'clock, he did ample justice to the good cheer before him.

“Sir,” said Mr. Brownrigg, “you were so good as to say, that if I came into the country, you would have a bed for me. Now, I really had some thought of going next summer; and last summer, I thought it should be this summer; and this summer, I put it off till next; but I really mean to go; for I’m hunting after a sister of mine, who, to say the truth, is a very good kind of body, only she would not marry to my liking.” Mr. Walker smiled, and looked benevolent. “Sir, I was very angry with her; but I believe, that’s twenty-five years ago, and I don’t feel quite so angry now as I

did then. Indeed, I had two sisters; but one was a good deal older than I am, and she did as she pleased before I grew up. Well, Sir, I came up to London, and sent for my youngest sister, and I fully meant to have done something pretty for her; but she fell in love, as the girls call it; and then I told her, if she liked her own way better than mine, it was her own affair. She certainly had a right to choose a husband for herself, but she had no right to give me a brother-in-law that I did not like, and so ended our acquaintance. But, here's a man in our neighbourhood bringing up a parcel of his sisters' children, and his wife seems as happy coddling these young ducks, as though they were her own chickens; and the thought struck me, how do I know but I've got a parcel of nephews and nieces. And, though I don't know what has happened to either of them for the last fifteen years, I thought I would inquire, and, if I liked the sample, why, who could say but I might do handsomely for one or two of them. You seem a man of kindness, Sir, and justice, what do you think of it?" "Why, Sir, I think it an excellent plan. I have only one objection to a part of your proposals." "Pray, speak your mind Sir; for I think I could almost be guided by you, and that's

a great thing for Jonathan Brownrigg, to say." "Sir, I think life so very uncertain, that I would not put off that for to-morrow, which I could do to-day; what's to hinder you to go this summer?" "Why, I've some thoughts of shifting my stock, and I must be upon the spot to do it. I was thinking of getting all my money into one stock, that there may be no confusion when I'm gone; and then, I thought these children of my sister will surely inherit. I might as well know them, and have the credit of giving away my own property, or at least tell them where it lies. After all, I must think my sister has a kindness for me. I was very kind to her, till she turned disobedient, and would do as she would." "And pray, Sir, in what part of the country may your friends live?" "Why, that I really cannot say, till I make enquiry. Last summer, I traced my youngest sister a part of the way, pretty near London; then I found she was gone in a westerly direction, nearly ninety miles from London. My curiosity did not hold out so far as that." *Mr. W.* My good Sir, when you are in a stage-coach, you may as well go ninety miles as twenty."—"Well; and if I can manage my business this July, it would not be worth while to lose my dividends, I must wait and take them."

Mr. W. said, "I believe, Sir, it is allowed, when the public funds are shifted." "Well, perhaps they may; but I can do nothing in a hurry; Jonathan Brownrigg never did any thing in a hurry." Protheroe Walker just drank his last glass and said, "I believe, Sir, I must do something in a hurry, or I shall be too late; so he gave Mr. B. his hand, who took it very cordially, making his best city bow; and they parted, mutually pleased with each other. They had but just got out of the gate, when Mr. B. remembered that he held the £20. He stepped back, took his hat and stick, and with long strides soon overtook them; and, pulling out his pocket-book, "Pray, Sir, take this, and promise if I come to P——, to introduce me to the redoubtable Mrs. Potter." Mr. Walker smiled. "I thought, Sir, you were already acquainted." "No; I have heard of her; and heard so much that I always kept clear of the coast while she was upon it." *Mr. Walker.* "I cannot blame you; good morning."

On Mr. Walker's return to P——, he requested his good lady to see Mrs. Potter, and to understand in what train her affairs were; and to drop no hint of the money, till she could learn, whether the affairs might not be settled without it; because it was going exactly

contrary to the wishes of the donor, to let it go to the distiller; and, it was a fixed maxim of Mr. Walker, to uphold no sin either directly or indirectly. When Mrs. Walker arrived, she found Mrs. Potter down stairs, bustling about, as though nothing had happened. She began, before this kind-hearted lady could approach. "I have found a friend," said she. "The brewer says, while I continue to take beer of him, he'll see what can be done; and there's to be a pleasant meeting to-night, of all the creditors; and, if the distiller would but come in, there'd be an end of all this confusion. I dare say it will take me a week to have this house cleaned up, after all the bustle that has been here." Mrs. W. saw very clearly, that a public-house was what Mrs. Potter preferred; and, that all Mr. W.'s kindness would be thrown away, if she could but accommodate the distiller. So she only said, "Well, madam, I see your affairs are arranged; and, if it's for your happiness, I am sure we shall all rejoice in it." Mrs. P. said, "No doubt, it was for her happiness; it was the way of living she had been used to, and she should find any other very dull. I think," said she, "there's something so benevolent in providing for such a parcel of people, and making them all happy."

Mrs. W. "Well, *Mrs. P.* I never had that idea of a public-house before ; but it is well indeed, that some one is found who will think of the traveller ; but, let me advise you, as soon as you have a sufficiency, to think of a retreat." "Retreat, indeed, madam ; what am I to retreat upon?"

This unprofitable sort of dialogue, determined *Mrs. Walker* not to say a single word ; when she was at once put off her guard, by the loquacious and keen landlady. She kept thinking to herself. "Well ; *Mr. W.* has been to town ; he is a meddling kind of man : I should not wonder if he had been and seen my uncle's old housekeeper, and perhaps he has got some money for me ; for, to be sure, if I had the heart to go to law with her ; if I could but pluck up a spirit ; but I was always too meek." All this, uttered in a sort of soliloquy, while *Mrs. W.* was adjusting her veil, and tying one of her shoes. "And so, Madam, I suppose you've something to say to me concerning my property ; perhaps the old housekeeper's conscience is worked up at last." "Why, indeed," said *Mrs. W.* (and she made a pause, remembering that her husband had desired her to communicate conditionally). "Oh, then," said *Mrs. P.* "Mr. Walker has seen *Mrs. Tucker*, has he,

Madam?" This excellent lady was exceedingly vexed at her own want of management, and she resolved to repair the mischief she had done, by giving a true and yet disagreeable statement, which she knew would send the inflammable Mrs. P. at a distance from that scent which she wished to conceal. "Mr. W. did see a person in London, who knew her; he told them your present distresses; they spoke highly of your uncle's housekeeper, and said, that she was a woman of excellent principles, and a great comfort to her late master." (*Mrs. Potter.*) "Oh, ma'am, she was an excellent nurse; she nursed every thing; she nursed his feet and hands in the gout, ma'am; she nursed the money in his pocket; and after his death, ma'am, she nursed herself into the good opinion of every body." "Your uncle was a bachelor, I think." "Oh, yes, ma'am; and pray, ma'am, if I may make so bold," said Mrs. P., "who is so very well acquainted with my uncle, and his old housekeeper?" "What Mr. W. heard, Mrs. P., was quite accidental; and, as you are not in want, there will be no occasion for further exertions." "I have not said, ma'am, that I had no want. I shall be obliged to borrow money of my brewer, to pay my distiller; and perhaps, as I say, I may drink sour beer all next summer, to make the distiller look

sweet at me." This was quite enough for Mrs. W.; she coolly said, "Good morning;" and returned to the Rectory.

Though entirely remote from pride, there was a settled dignity in this lady, and she never advanced to familiarity with such characters as Mrs. Potter; so for the present, the £20 note remained in the keeping of Mr. Walker.

"I do not think, my love, you have managed this matter well," said her good man, when she related the adventure of the morning. "You are perfectly right; and I was so aware of it, that I repented going; but 'the path of the wicked is full of snares.'" "Yes," said her excellent husband; "the more I see of human nature, even in its best estate, the more I am convinced that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; but this £20 note teases me; I wish I had never had it. I have really a mind to give it her; I have a cowardly feeling about it; I wish to clear myself entirely of all interference in Mrs. Potter's affairs; I see that I can do no good."

Mrs. W. "Perhaps, my dear, you might pay some honest creditor; or you could keep it, till she was really in want." "Are you sure, Sophia, that she does not suspect I have something for her?" "Perfectly sure."

This good man at last came to the following resolution : that he would call upon her, give her the note, and say, that if she left off her present employment, there was a like sum for her every six months ; but, there was no support for public-houses likely to come from Mrs. Tucker.

With this resolution, he put on his hat, and went out on his unpleasant business. When he arrived there, he found the brewer and the distiller, the farmer, the butcher ; in short, all Mrs. P.'s principal creditors in consultation ; so he begged to speak with her apart. " I saw your uncle's housekeeper, Mrs. P. when I was in London ; and told her your distress ; I found her a very correct, worthy woman, and not unwilling to return good for evil ; to treat you with humanity, who had never shown her any. She sends you this £20 ; and, if you give up your present mode of life, you may have a like sum every six months, by applying to Mr. Brownrigg, No. 21 ;" and he pointed out the very spot where this gentleman lived. And now, thankful to be rid of a business which had never pleased him, he offered a Pastor's prayer as he left the gateway ; and, when doubt of its acceptance crossed his mind, this thought cheered him, " nothing is too hard for the Lord."

But we must return to the Brow and the Valley, to the Mill and the Rectory; our first friends and most endeared, and we linger fondly among them. On the return of Stephen and his mother, Michael called to welcome them, and to beg Fanny should want nothing which the Brow might afford, to make his mother comfortable, and the Mill neat. Mrs. Meredith was soon at work for her grand-children, and soon one in their domestic plans; she was mending sacks, making frocks, busy in the garden; in short, her active hand was every where. And Michael, whose eye saw all that was excellent, and looked kindly on all, was frequently found making one in their little circle. As they were sitting one evening, Michael reading an account of the Moravian teachers among the Hottentots, from the Missionary Register, Fanny with her baby on her lap, observed, "My dear brother, these people seem to receive the Word with joy; conversions seem more certain and abiding than they are here." "I hope not, Fanny. I quite agree, that they appear to receive it with greater simplicity. But I trust that here, when it is received, there are many who bring forth fruit abundantly, and who stand firmly." As they were in the midst of this conversation the door opened, and the quiet form

of Esther Humphries glided in. She slipped behind the chairs, and put down her bundle on the table which stood behind Fanny. "Pull off your bonnet, Esther, and stop a bit." "Give me something to do?" Fanny gave her the border of a cap. "I have a few words to say to you, bye-and-bye, Fanny." "Any thing of importance?" "I cannot say." Fanny looked surprized; and Mrs. M. in continuation of a question that she was about to ask, when Esther entered, said, "and so, Sir, you think that those Hottentots are quite changed, quite entire new people, Sir?" "Yes, ma'am, I do think so. I think the same wonderful change which God effects in us, when he sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts, is effected in them, only in them it is more striking, because they were the most degraded of our species: and they are now become neat and orderly, and submissive, to those who go among them." "Indeed, Sir." "Yes, ma'am. It is a very beautiful description which we have in these Registers, of the power of religion in Africa, and indeed over all the face of the earth. I hope we shall not be darker than those to whom we send the light."

Mrs. M. "Oh, dear me, no; I think that is very unlikely." Michael shook his

head, and she continued, "why, do you think, Mr. Kemp, that we shall ever put the entrails of the cattle round our necks, as the savages used to do?" "No; but I am not speaking of our outward habits; but our minds, of our prejudices, and our indifference. Now, I will give you an instance. I called on Sunday morning, to see a poor man in this parish, who lies very ill, and Mr. Lascelles had requested me to call to see him. When I went in," (Mrs. Meredith looked with a sort of astonishment at him, that Mr. Lascelles should ask Mr. Kemp to visit the sick for him.) She ventured to say, "Mr. Cooper visits the sick himself." "Doubtless; but I only mention this circumstance, to show you her sad ignorance and prejudice. This poor man was extremely ill, and he was one whom Mr. L. has hardly ever seen at church: so he asked me just to call, and read to him, and said he would see him himself the following day. I perceived by the looks of the wife, that I was not welcome; and, as I drew aside the curtain to ask him how he was, she came up to me, and said, she should be glad to speak with me. 'I hope, Sir, you be not going to disturb my husband, for he is very comfortable and peaceful.' I assured her that I was come at the request of Mr. Lascelles,

to enquire how he was, and to ask the state of his mind; as he never came to church, Mr. L. feared he had hitherto lived without God in the world. She replied, that ‘people were very hard judging, and she believed her husband was as good a Christian as any man in the parish, be the other whom he would; for he had always been a good husband to her, and a good father to the children, though he did stay a little at the public-house; and that she could not bear to have him disturbed and frightened.’

“By this time, the sick man began to inquire who was there; and when I replied, that I had called to see him by Mr. L’s. wish, he replied, ‘It’s mighty kind of Mr. L; I’m a great deal better; I sha’nt die this bout.’ But whether you die or live, Sir, said I, it is well you should entertain thoughts of that country to which you are hastening. ‘Oh, as for that, Sir, I see no good in talking about what we don’t understand; there is nobody ever came back to tell us about it; so it is not to be supposed as any body can know.’” “That’s very true,” said Mrs. Meredith. Poor Stephen sat on thorns. He saw that his mother was as ignorant as the man Mr. Kemp was describing, and the latter scarcely knew whether to go on, or to

stop. At length he ventured to say, "But you know, ma'am, we have the written Word of God; we have his ordinances in the church; and, if we neglect these." Here Mrs. M. coloured very deeply, and said, "It was easy for people as had nothing else to do, to be constant at church; for her own part, she had always found it very difficult to go regular." Stephen said, "Well, Sir, and did you go on talking to this poor man?" "I asked him whether he had any fear of death? He said, 'he supposed nobody wished to die; he had not met with any body that did; it was not very natural to suppose they should like to go, and leave all their friends and relations.'

"I saw that it was next to impossible for me to be heard; so, after desiring he would send to the Brow Farm for any thing he wanted, I read a few texts touching upon human depravity, and on our lost estate by nature, and I saw they had scarce patience to let me finish. Now, I think this is a proof, that the darkness of our minds is quite as deep as that of the Hottentots." "Indeed, I think so," said Fanny; and so thought every one but Mrs. M.; and she still continued to think, that there was more fuss made about religion than was at all necessary. "Baby's asleep; if you will come up with me, Esther, I'll lay her down

on the bed." They both went up stairs. "Kind Mr. L. sent for me this afternoon, to say he had received a letter, inquiring if he had any such persons in the parish as Margaret Beal, and Mary Humphries; if he had, and would signify it to the house of Roberts and Co. Old Broad-street, they might hear something to their advantage. Mr. L. was so good as to say, he would write any letters for us; but I should be very sorry to trouble him, for it may be all a trick. I have heard of such things; have not you?" Fanny replied, "she had; but that she thought there was no end to be answered, by inquiring in such a Village as this; none but a good one. Have you any relations." "None that I know of. I have heard my mother speak of a brother, with whom she lived; but it is many years since, and I hardly remember him." Fanny thought it likely to be this uncle, and Esther thought the same; "but," said she, pausing, "I have heard my mother say, my uncle was so very much prejudiced against my poor father, and against religion." "Oh," said Fanny, "but you know, there is nothing too hard for our God." "Nothing," said Esther. "Ah, that *would* be a blessing, if my mother should find a change in him; but, if it is only to find him and his money, it would

sadly disturb the peace of our house, to have *one* who did not believe. We are all of one heart and one mind, and we live so comfortable." "They that fear the Lord, shall want no manner of thing that is good," said Fanny; "and so, Esther, my good girl, you are afraid of being rich."

Esther. "Not of being rich, Mrs. Meredith; but I am afraid of being independant of God. I am afraid of my own heart; because I know how deceitful it is; and I know it is no uncommon trick to draw people into inquiry in London, into temporal inconvenience, to unsettle them from the plain and obvious path of duty; and I should be sorry on my mother's account, because it would be raising ideas in her mind about my uncle's money, in which she is sure to be disappointed. We could not be happier than we are; I have sufficient to do, and we have not a want." "Then what do you mean to do, my dear." "To be guided entirely by Mr. Lascelles. But I was thinking, Mrs. Meredith, whether it would not be better to make the inquiry, if it is to be made, without saying any thing to my poor mother; for, as to me, it will be no disappointment if nothing comes of it; but for her, she certainly has a great regard for my uncle; and the hope of seeing him again; and

living happily with him, will be very delightful to her. So that I think it would be wisest to be at some certainty, before we communicate to her." "Did you say this to Mr. Lascelles, my dear." "No; I did not. But I think I shall step back, and ask the favour of him to inquire." "Yes; that must be right; for he is a kind gentleman, and I feel almost sure he would do any thing to serve you." "But, Mrs. Meredith, I have kept you a long time talking; you'll find all the things right in the bundle; and remember, if there is any thing I can do at any time, it will be a great pleasure for me." So Esther departed, and Mrs. Meredith began to observe immediately, what a very neat young person she was; "what sweet eyes, as blue as violets," said she, "with the pretty brown fringes over them; and such nice hands, like a lady's quite."

Fanny. "Yes indeed, mother, she is a very nice young person; and what is best of all, her mind is better than her body."—"So I should think," said Mrs. M. "for she seems made up of goodness. How pretty she sat down to work for you directly."—"Oh," said Fanny, "she is always doing something for me, she is the kindest creature, I am sure. My little Ellen has been kept so nice: many thanks to Esther

Humphries.” Stephen and Michael had walked to the window, and were talking about poor Richard Moss, who was in a great state of weakness and distress; not exactly for money, because he was supplied by Michael with the daily allowance, which was more than sufficient for his real wants; but he could no longer go to the public-house, and he missed his companions there, and he had no comfort in his own bosom, which would make solitude agreeable to him. Michael felt for him, and that text was upon his tongue. “You see, Stephen, ‘the way of transgressors is hard.’”—“Indeed it is,” said Stephen. “There was one thing I was sorry to hear: the woman where he lodges, ever since he has been ill, has been begging of him to read his Bible, and to settle his affairs; and when she found he had nothing to leave, but that it was a daily allowance from you, she has altered her conduct, and become very far from kind, so Moss tells me.”

“Do you know,” said Michael, “I am so far a predestinarian as to think nothing happens in vain, and in this case it may do for Richard what neither you nor I could have done without it. Sickness is a silent preacher, but it works wonders; it brings down the haughtiness of man and lays it

low, and in that day the Lord alone is exalted.”—“ Well, that is true, Sir, and I am sure he wanted some chastisement.”

Michael. “ We all want it, my dear Stephen, and our good God will give it us sooner or later, a portion to our need. But I must go to this poor man ; I understand he desires to see me, I wish it may be upon good ground. Have you seen him, Stephen ? ”—“ Just for two minutes, the other evening, but he seemed very shy of me, and said he should like to see his master Kemp.” “ I have always felt, in thinking of Richard, that his kind cousin’s plans were defeated, for he never came to the Brow with a wish to profit, except in the way of money, and of that I never have much to spare, beside his regular allowance, and that began to be too little for him, so that he got a knack of counting it, and fancying that there was some mistake, some day that he had called, and that I was not at home, though it had all been as regularly settled as possible ; it is very disagreeable to be suspected in money matters.”

Stephen. “ I hope, Sir, you never suffer it to make you at all uneasy, because every one would acquit you.” “ And what’s of more consequence, Stephen, my own conscience acquits me. This man must be at

least sixty-four or sixty-five, I have treated him always with the respect of a son ; indeed, I have ever considered that it was my duty to do so, for I am certainly under great obligations to his own relative. Every thing I enjoy, Stephen, in time, comes from his family."

Thus these good young men stood conversing, till the shadows of evening and its cool breezes made Michael button his coat tighter, and with his oak staff sat out for the Brow. That parish had been infested by gipsies for a length of years ; there had been some stop put to their plunder by the exportation of the gipsy grandfather, but still the little copses tempted them by offering shelter against the severity of the weather, and affording them a fine summer canopy to their various parties, and the Brow farm had always been an object of their aversion, since the prompt measures were taken for expelling them.

Michael was drawing near his home, when William came down the hill. "Master, you were late to-night, and Betty and I thought it better to come forward to meet you ; for, though the gipsy grandfather is transported, and Samson is safe-lodged, there are some sturdy fellows among them, such as I should not like you to meet

alone. There's something in the wind, I think, they have been hovering about here ever since it grew dark, and I fired the little old pistols out at the back door, and since that I determined to come on to you."

Our pedestrians reached their home in safety, Michael determined the following morning he would see Mr. Lascelles, and have some measures taken to clear the country; for this was not an innocent party, but a sturdy set whom it was not safe to meet; they fastened their doors, took all outward precautions, and went to their rest in peace, and rose the following morning in safety.

The silent progress of Esther's modest virtues were not unobserved by Michael; he never had felt any preference, she had never struck him but as a quiet unpretending girl, but he had walked down occasionally to the spinning-school, and there, when a new person was taken in, he had heard them say, "How awkward she is; I don't believe she'll ever fasten her thread;" and the mistress would reply, "I don't know that you would ever have done it, if it had not been for Esther." (The other laughing) "Very true, Mrs. but Esther Humphries be made up of patience." And an old bedridden woman, to whom

Michael gave leave to send for some milk, morning and evening, and on whom he occasionally called, had always some grateful word to say of Esther. Still he passed her by, and he had no present intention, but it was certainly like the stealing influence of the sun; he could not but feel it. In her own dwelling he had never seen her, and except twice, he had never met her at his sister's. This good girl was methodical and orderly, every thing found its proper time and its proper place; she was so complete a workwoman, that her little narrow hems formed the edge of all her borders, and so delicately clean, that it gave you an idea of the purity within; she expended upon herself but a very small portion of her own earnings, and yet she would not give her mother all she received, but every now and then some useful thing was slipped into her drawers, which she knew her kind parent would not have purchased. And her aunt too shared her bounty: a warm shawl, a new apron, a pair of Sunday gloves; and the good woman would say, "Esther, child, it shan't be," and she went on with her work. "I say it shan't be, child; here are you working early and late, never getting a bit of a walk, and all to dress up me and your mother." The tears in the good girl's eyes, tears of joy,

would glisten while she replied, "My dear aunt, if you knew what a pleasure it is to me, that you will take any thing that I can buy, you would not say it shan't be." Affairs were in this train, when Mr. Lascelles, with an open letter in his hand, met Esther coming towards his house. "Good morning, Hetty, are you going to the rectory?"—"Yes, Sir."—"Very good; I was going to seek you," and stepped back with her there. "Sit down," as he pointed to the chair in his study, and closing the door; "that letter I have this morning received." The contents were as follows:

SIR,—I beg you to accept my thanks for the trouble I have occasioned you; I would trespass farther. Will you permit one of your servants to inform Margaret Beal and Mary Humphries that Jonathan Brownrigg, their brother, intends paying them a visit early in next week, perhaps Tuesday.—Sir, your faithful humble servant,
J. BROWNRIGG.

N. B. They must get me a bed somewhere. I am sorry to trouble you so much, Sir; but if you come to London, I am a leisure man, and I will be at your service.

Poor Esther's colour went and came as she perused this, and Mr. L. looked at

her with an inquiring eye as he walked up and down his study with his stick under his arm. "Well, this is pleasant news, is it not, my good girl?"—"Why, Sir, I'm so very happy, so very contented, that I'm afraid of a change." (*Mr. L.*, with a dignified look, and a sweet habitual composure,) "They shall not be afraid of any evil tidings, for their heart standeth firm, and believeth in the Lord."

Esther. That's a delightful state, Sir; I wish I could say in my heart that I never was afraid; but we are so peaceful and tranquil, and I don't know quite what my uncle's temper may be, so that it makes me feel very anxious, and I really don't know how to break the news to my mother; I think she will be pleased too.

Mr. Lascelles. "I have no doubt of it; I have heard a character of him from my friend Mr. Walker, which is extremely pleasing." "Is he at all religious?" "I fear not, but his moral qualities seem excellent, and deserving our respect."

Esther rose to be going, and was planning and projecting all the way home: they had wondered at her stay, and as she entered, her aunt said, "There have been two or three asking for you."

Esther. I'm very sorry for it, aunt;

I'm afraid they have troubled you, but I have been to the rectory.—“To the rectory,” said Mary Humphries.—“To the rectory,” repeated her aunt. “Yes, I had a little business,” and again she hesitated. “Well, child, speak out,” said her mother. She did, and then presented her uncle's letter, and sat watching the countenance of her mother. She observed the tears steal down her cheeks; she folded the letter, and went to her room. “Is any thing the matter, Esther, love?” said Margaret. Esther repeated the whole. “Well,” said Margaret, “this is particular, that ever Jonathan should think of coming to see us. This is such an answer to my prayers; never did I think to gladden my eyes with the sight of my brother again, poor fellow! But Hetty, how did you know about your uncle, child?” —“I heard nothing, aunt, but what I have told you; 'tis all through Mr. Lascelles.”

By this time the mother rejoined the family circle, and they were all looking at each other with doubtful expression. Esther was fearful to say any thing, not knowing the exact state of her mother's mind. However, at last she hazarded. “Well, mother, you have read that letter?”—

“ Yes, my love, and I hope it will be all for good, Hetty ; all good for you, my dear.”

Margaret. Oh, there’s no doubt of that, my dear Mary ; all things shall work together for good, to them that love God.

Mary. But there is an old saying, Margaret, “ A burnt child do dread the fire ;” and though I love my dear brother, yet I have had some painful days with him. You don’t remember him, my dear, do you, Hetty.

Esther. “ No, mother, I don’t indeed ; I don’t think I ever saw him.”—“ Dear me, I don’t think you ever did ; he called once, I remember, but I believe it was before you were born.”—“ Well, we must think about getting ready for him, aunt ; how shall we manage it ?”—“ Why, child, I really can’t say ; but I was thinking perhaps Mrs. Meredith would give me a bed, she is so very kind to you, child.”—“ Oh, aunt, I am sure she would, but I do not think they have one to spare ; perhaps you could get one at the clerk’s ; shall I go, aunt ?”—“ Why no, child, you have a great deal of work to do ; I’ll put on my bonnet, and go myself ; I think a little fresh air would revive me.” So she set off, but had not gone far before she met Fanny Meredith with her baby in her

arms. "Well, this is a sight, neighbour, to see you go walking; you would almost make me doubt the day of the week." Margaret told her errand, and how Esther had said, that Mrs. Meredith could not help them.—"Oh, but," said Fanny, "if I have not a bed, there are plenty at the Brow; so don't you go any further, neighbour, about that, for I'll speak to my brother, and settle that for you; and you know Betty Smith, the good creature, she will take care to have every thing aired and in its right place."—"Well, this is very kind of you, Mrs. Meredith, I don't know that we can do better." So the plan was settled.

Michael had seen Mr. Lascelles upon the subject of the gipsies, and he had got a warrant to remove them; and it was just at this moment that Margaret and Fanny were about to part, that they perceived the whole cavalcade moving down the street. Their looks were determined and resentful, and Margaret and Fanny both trembled as they passed them; but the constable was in attendance, and two or three stout men beside, and several farmers on horseback were riding slowly behind them. All these precautions taken, it was hoped the country would be cleared; but there was something more than commonly

malignant in this party. James Brown had kept within for some days, for he had never felt secure while they were there. Poor fellow! he had suffered enough for the folly of his youth, and it might truly be said, "that the wickedness of his heels encompassed him." His heart smote him when he remembered how long he had been a companion of these desperate people.

Margaret. Why, they are frightful creatures howsoever.

Fanny. They are indeed, neighbour; I believe they are the same gang that Robert belonged to. Poor Robert, he is sadly punished, I believe his end is near.

Margaret. "Dear me, and is he to be hanged then? Well, I remember Farmer Newton always said, that boy would come to be hanged, for you see it's pretty clear when they do nothing but mischief. I say its pretty clear what must be the end of it.—Well, a good morning to you, neighbour." Fanny went on to the Brow, and met her brother just as he was going up the hill; he took her baby, and they ascended together. When he had heard her message, it was, "Oh yes, undoubtedly, certainly; whatever you wish, my dear. But when did you say?"—"On Tuesday, I think: it was not quite fixed, it depended on the coaches."—"Those gipsies

are removed, Fanny, I find ; we have not been able to keep an egg lately ; I have lost a good many chickens, and the night before last I think they took a pig from the sty."

Fanny. "No matter, brother, so they let you be in peace." "Well, Fanny, if this good man comes on Tuesday, I suppose some one will conduct him here, or must I call." "I don't know what to say, my dear brother, I think it might be better to let Stephen bring him here ; I'll manage that." The spirit of this dear girl was so kind, and her influence so general, that she was quite secure of having all her little schemes accomplished.

We must now return to Jonathan Brownrigg, and give the reader some idea of the state of his mind. It is true he had every thing he wanted, as far as meat, drink, and clothing : he had a pleasant little house, but he sat down alone by his fire, and now he had lost his daily employments in his retreat from trade, he began to find what many others have found before him, that the mere business of eating, drinking, and dressing, reading the newspaper, and looking out of the window to see whose carriages past, made a vapid and childish life : and he resolved to

employ the remaining period of existence, in a way more suited to comfort and usefulness. "If I have any nieces or nephews," said he to himself, "they may help to amuse me. I think I could turn schoolboy for once, and assist in flying a kite." Well, he determined to enquire, and the reader has heard the result; and he has taken his place for the following Tuesday, and he is now seated in the coach, with only three companions, a farmer, a little girl who has just left school, and a gentleman, of whom he can make nothing, as he will not speak a word. Mr. B. was a compassionate soul, and could in no way account for this taciturnity, unless by illness or ill temper, "You are unwell, Sir, shall I change sides with you?" "No, Sir, I thank you," was the cold reply, and they travelled on in a melancholy silence. He was more successful with the little girl, whom he furnished with biscuits, and whose history he had from beginning to end: the farmer too was communicative, and gave broad hints of what he could do if he were at the head of affairs. Mr. B. was strictly loyal, and assured him that we often found fault with what we could not mend, and that to the government their task was not easy, for if they pleased one party, they

were sure to displease the other, and that for his part, he had set a resolution, to begin reformation at home, where he knew it was wanted, and my dear Sir, if you and many others of the yeomanry would take the same resolution, I have no doubt but the present evils would be more easily borne. The agriculturist replied, "it was easy for the trader who had made his fortune, and retired, to be contented with distress which did not touch him. But for those who had the burden to bear, it was a different thing; and if things went on as they did, gentlemen would be obliged to farm their own estates." Mr. B. saw that the subject was painful, and began again to talk to the little girl, "You're a young traveller, Miss, shall you have a friend to meet you?" "No, Sir, I believe not; when I get down, I know very well where to go." "You are sorry to leave school, I suppose?" "Yes, Sir, I'm sorry for some things, but for others I shall be glad." "Well, now, for what should you be sorry?" "I shall leave some nice companions, Sir, but I shall be glad to have done with lessons and study, and all that." "Oh," said Mr. B. "I thought study was very delightful. I thought it was one of the charms of the boarding-school; I'm think-

ing you'll miss it sadly." The little girl laughed, and shook her head.

Mr. B. "Well, come now, tell me, how shall you spend your time at home?"

"Oh, I am sure I cannot tell, but I shall go out and see mamma's friends, and have company at home."

Mr. B. "And don't you mean to work for your papa and your brothers?"

"Oh, I suppose I shall a little."

"If you were my little girl, I should make you work a good deal, and as for going visiting, you would have but very little of it, I can tell you. I think, for the most part, it is spending time very idly. When you come home from your visitings, now tell me the truth, do you not begin to point out some defect, to wonder at some oddity, or to ridicule some personal deformity?"

"Oh no, Sir!"

Mr. B. "Why, now, can you say that you never laugh at any thing you see or hear when you've been visiting, if you can?" And he took his pocket book out of his pocket. "Come, give me your name, for I must put it down," the child looked a little confused. "Now, I'll tell you what you'll say when you get home, you'll begin about the people in the coach; you'll say that you travelled with such a

queer looking man with a long nose, and a snuff coloured coat, and a brown bob, and then you'll begin to mimic me, and you'll tell your mamma that there was a gentleman in the corner who did not speak a word to you, that there was a farmer who did nothing but grumble, and you'll quite forget all the good advice I have given you." Little miss looked rather put out, for she really had been thinking what an odd set they were, and that she should tell mamma about them, so that Mr. Brownrigg appeared to her to be endowed with prophetic powers, and she remained silent during the rest of the journey.

When Mr. B. reached the town nearest the village, where his sister dwelt, he saw a remarkably good-looking man enquiring for him; it was Stephen Meredith; "Is there a gentleman come by the coach of the name of Brownrigg?" Mr. B., with his little bag in one hand, his umbrella under his arm, and his purse in his hand, ready to settle, looked round quickly at this enquiry, "Yes, Sir, my name is Brownrigg."

Stephen. "Sir, I was coming over on a little business, and Mrs. Beal asked me to show you the way to her dwelling, and as we had a spare horse, I brought one for you, Sir."

“I’m extremely obliged to you. This is unexpected kindness, it’s many years since I was on horseback ; we Londoners find the stages so convenient, Sir, that we do not often exhibit ourselves on the road ; but as you have been so very kind”——
The affair was soon arranged.

“ You know my sister then, Sir,” said Mr. B. as they were riding along together.

Stephen. Yes, Sir, I know Mrs. Beal very well ; she’s a very nice woman, and so is Mrs. Humphries and her daughter.

Brownrigg. Her daughter ! oh, then she has only one, I suppose ?

Stephen. No, Sir.

Brownrigg. No son ?

Stephen. No, sir.

Brownrigg. Well, we can’t help that, to be sure, I should have liked a boy, but, if I can’t have both, perhaps a good stay at home girl. Yes, yes, I dare say it’s all right.

Stephen. Oh yes, Sir, no doubt of that.

Brownrigg. Oh, you think its all ordered, I suppose ?

Stephen. Yes, Sir, the scripture tells us, that “ not a hair shall fall to the ground without the knowledge of our heavenly Father.”

Brownrigg. And so you say she is a

nice girl. Come, you must tell me a little about her; let's see, how old is she?

Stephen (smiling). Why, Sir, we don't ask the ladies' ages; but I should suppose about twenty.

Brownrigg. Is she tall?

Stephen. Rather tall than short, Sir.

Brownrigg. Is she fair?

Stephen. Yes, very fair.

Brownrigg. Oh, so was her mother, foolish creature—but it's too late to be angry—I've been angry over and over again—and so she's tall and fair—she is altogether a good-looking girl, I suppose?

Stephen. Yes, Sir, indeed, a very sweet young woman, and such a pretty, modest way with her, that's she's greatly respected all over the village, both by high and low.

Brownrigg. It was very kind of you, Sir, to come and meet me, I suppose you are a near neighbour?

Stephen. Not very near, Sir, but my wife and your niece are very good friends, and my wife's brother, who has been the best friend I ever had, would never hinder me of a horse, if I wanted it; and if you please, Sir, you're to sleep there to-night.

Brownrigg. Very good, Sir, wherever they may see fit to put me. But I must see my sister to-night, for I'm an impa-

tient man, and like Joseph, "My bowels yearn over my relations," and though I am not lord over all Egypt, I have made a pretty little sum by fair trading—and I may make the rest of their days comfortable. I suppose they have not much, poor things.

Stephen. I don't know, Sir, they make a very decent appearance.

Mr. B. buttoned his coat tight, and the tear was in his eye: he drew up the reins of his horse, held them as though he were accurately measuring their length, and went on silently. "Pretty country, Sir." "Yes, very. I hear the distant bell, I suppose you have some rejoicing?" "I don't know, Sir, that there is any thing particular." They rode on for some time, and they entered the borders of the village, and began to meet faces whom Stephen knew. "And now, Sir, we have not far to go; do you like to ride into the village, or shall I take your horse?" "I should be sorry to trouble you, Sir, to take the horse. I could ride forwards with you and put up the horse, and then go to my sister." "There is no occasion for that, Sir, because we shall come to Mrs. Beal's, quite in the middle of the village, and I shall have a hill to climb, which is quite unnecessary for you."

“ You are really very kind ; but I am ashamed of being so troublesome to you.” The affair settled, they parted at the entrance of the village, Stephen promising to send one to guide him to the Brow, where he was to sleep.

And now, reader, we must visit the waiting family, every member of which experienced a palpitating uneasiness at the prospect of the meeting : for though they had all lifted their hearts in secret, and fortified one another by the remembrance that all things work together for good, still they dreaded change where all had been so peaceful, and every step was listened to, and as the sun was descending to the west—“ Well, sister, I do not think he will come to-night,” said Margaret. “ Not come ? oh, I never knew Jonathan fail in an appointment.” She had just said this as he entered the little garden gate, and closing it carefully after him, was walking up the neat gravel path, when Mary Humphries met him, and taking his umbrella with one hand, and pressing his other in silence, she led him to their little sitting room, where Esther was at her work. Margaret had just stepped into the back kitchen to see to the vegetables she was about to boil for his

supper. Esther rose to take his bag, and waited modestly blushing till he should take notice of her. "My dear brother!" He stifled his feelings, "Where's Margaret?" and Esther stepped back, "My uncle is come," and in a moment his sister was at his side. "Time has changed us," said Mr. Brownrigg, "I should not have known either of you." "Time and sorrow," said Mary Humphries, "we have both had sad losses." "I told you so," said he, "I told you a single life was best for you, see I have lost nothing." "My dear brother, you must have lost some of your friends and acquaintance." "Oh, certainly, but then I have new ones if the old die off." Mary shook her head, "Ah, my dear brother, I know you better." Esther was glad to hear her mother say this, for she did not like her uncle's speech, and she now perceived that it was play, mild play. Under a meeting of this kind, the mind is so oppressed, and the variety of ideas that dwell upon it, that there can be no enjoyment. Silence seems the best refuge—sometimes activity is a relief—and this they all found it. So one began to lay the cloth, another went up stairs with the bag, yet frequently saying some little kind word of

welcome and endearment; “And don’t you remember, Margaret,” “And don’t you remember, Jonathan,” were the frequent expletives. Esther could not join much; but she stole a few glances at this newly found relation, and assisted in preparing the humble meal.

Mr. B. was as much at a loss as any of them, for he was full of very kind feelings, and he did not like the retrospect, because he thought he had been rather too severe, and when he saw the amiable young creature before him, and reflected that she did not even know him, a something like shame stole over his mind, when he conjectured what she must think of him. So he began to talk of Mrs. Potter, and asked Margaret if she remembered her. Mary Humphries clearly recollected her, and much that was censurable in her conduct, particularly her unkindness to her uncle’s active housekeeper; but she was some time in comprehending what her brother had to do with it. He explained the accidental meeting with Mr. Walker, and then asked if they knew him. “Ah, nothing happens in vain,” said Margaret, “all the links of providence are fitted to each other.” “I begin to think so, too, Mary. For my heart was yearning over you at the very time, when this benevolent

black coat fell in my way. Do you know if he has been down here." "Really I do not, brother, but I remember some years ago," said Margaret, "that he was here at Mrs. Meredith's wedding, I believe he is a great friend to the Kemp family." (*Brownrigg.*) "I should think he would be a kind friend to any who fell in his way. The law of kindness is upon his lip; I don't know when I have been so pleased with any person: he had a nephew with him, a very pleasing young man."

They were conversing thus, when a gentle tap at the door was responded to, by "Come in," and Michael Kemp presented himself: "he had come," as he said, "to assist Mr. Brownrigg in finding his way to the Brow, by taking a short cut, through some of the fields, and avoiding the steep ascent." "This is very kind of you, Sir, you will do as we do, Mr. Kemp." "I thank you, Sir, I took my supper before I came. I can wait your leisure." So Michael sat quietly turning over the leaves of a book which lay in the window-seat, it was *Olney Hymns*, and that beautiful one, "How blest thy creature is, oh Lord," first arrested his attention. "And now, Sir," said Brownrigg, buttoning up his coat,

“ I am at your service,” and taking up his umbrella and his hat, “ But who has run away with my bag?” “ I carried it up stairs, Sir,” said Esther. “ Oh, you rogue. Well, you must fetch me my night-cap, or stop, let me see, I had better go myself, if you please. And good night to you, good night to you, and what time must I be with you to-morrow?” These minor affairs settled, he set out on his walk to the Brow.

It was a beautiful moonlight evening, and those clouds which had been tinged with the setting sun, had not yet lost their brilliancy. “ You live in London, I believe, Sir,” said Michael. “ No, Sir, indeed, I have lived in the country for some time, I have a garden and keep chickens; in short, I have all the conveniences of London, and all the pleasures of the country, except to be sure we have a little dust, which we must expect, where there are so many carriages passing; but I have some trees at the bottom of my garden, so that the dust does not annoy us much.” “ You would find it very different here, Sir,” said Michael, “ we are never troubled with dust, never amused with carriages. But as you’re fond of a garden, you will find plenty of amusement, Mrs. Beal’s flowers are beautiful, she al-

ways took pains with them; and our rectory garden is a very fine one, for the rector and his family are all fond of flowers." "I like them myself," said Mr. Brownrigg, "I have a neighbour next door to me who laughs at my bed of carnations, he says, Well, neighbour Brownrigg, for my part, I think the finest flower is the cauliflower." "I have often been struck with the beauty even of vegetables," said Michael Kemp, "the kail in particular." "Yes, yes," said Brownrigg, "I know."

Michael. There is the hand of a great master, Sir, in all the works of nature.

Brownrigg. Yes, and in nothing more than our own form, and now I begin to feel I am going up hill, that I breathe with more difficulty, and my foot also is sensible of a change. I was called in the other day to assist in restoring a drowned man, we had one of the faculty with us, who was showing me how to rub so as to encourage the play of the lungs, it's very surprising! I never had a notion of it before.

Michael felt the influence of his new companion: he did not think him a religious character, and yet there was something pleasant, something that he liked, and he was careful not to offend him.

Brownrigg was equally careful to make himself agreeable to one who had so kindly provided for his accommodation. Betty Smith was at the door looking out for her master, and William at her side ; and there were slippers at the fire, and the candle was lighted as soon as they entered, and the gleam sent over the ample kitchen, showed Brownrigg the clean and orderly accommodations of the farmer's dwelling: his servants stood waiting to know his pleasure, and Michael did not hesitate to bring out his Bible, and to seat himself for prayer.

Brownrigg was taken by surprize, and he could not and would not object. The chapter in turn was Nathan's parable of the ewe-lamb, and the beautiful chapter being read unexpectedly, without other association, presented itself in a prominent manner to the eye of his mind; and Michael ventured to tell his household, that in many things where defects are pointed by scripture, reading this sentence, "thou art the man," is suitable in its application, and in none more than in indifference. This observation fastened upon the memory of Brownrigg, and the more strongly, perhaps, because he felt that however he might conform to the

outward rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belonged, he was not much interested in any part of its devotions, and had often been surprized to see men of sense contend with so much heat, about what he thought mere matter of opinion.

Michael observed, that in general many were more ready to make the application than to receive it : and he said this required great guard, for we must remember we were not prophets sent to our fellow-creatures with warnings and threatenings, but plain, ordinary characters, who should be ready to learn from the Word of God, and if bringing the application to our own bosoms by faith and examination, we were to say, “ thou art the man,” it would be more becoming than to suffer our censures to rest on others.

Brownrigg was pleased upon the whole : he thought what the young farmer said was true, and yet it was a mode entirely new to him, thus applying the scriptures, and especially the Old Testament, to ourselves. The following morning he ventured to ask Michael, “ whether he had ever been a preacher ?” Michael replied, “ he never had, and that he was greatly surprized at the question.” But as the mind of each was under the law of kind-

ness, nothing that offended either passed, and the conversation turned upon village improvements, the new school, &c. &c.

As soon as breakfast was over, Mr. Brownrigg equipped himself for walking, and said he would find his way to his sister's. As he descended the hill from the Brow, he could not but observe the beauty of the surrounding landscape: the irregular, but picturesque form of the village, the church which rose ivy-crowned, and the thickly studded cottages among the distant foliage: the winding river and the level plain in the distance. "This is all very pretty," said he, "but I am afraid I should grow tired. I think I should sigh for London. No, I do not think it would do to transplant me. I am used to the place where I am, and I should be out of my element here, but there is no haste, I shall take my time." Thus resolving, he continued his way till he found himself among the high trees near the rectory. To be sure, I must have turned wrong, I never remember this. Well, there can be no harm in asking. So he went towards the back part of the house, and asked if they could direct him the way to Mrs. Beal's cottage, the servant replied, that indeed she knew nothing of her: he asked the way to the village, she told him he must

keep to the right, and while he was thus conversing with her, Mr. Lascelles passing through the garden, overheard this last direction. "Who can that be?" said he, musing, and when he understood for whom he enquired, pulling on his gloves which he had heretofore held in his hand, he said, "I am going to visit a sick neighbour, and I will put you on your road." So Mr. Lascelles and Mr. B. walked on together. "You are Mrs. Beal's brother, I presume?" "Yes, Sir." "You are happy in two very amiable sisters, and two whom I consider very useful in my parish." (*Mr. Brownrigg.*) "I am glad to hear it, Sir, though I could not have expected it, for I should never have thought they had the power of being useful." "Excuse me," said Mr. Lascelles, "I do not mean in giving money, that I consider as of secondary importance; but their example, their order, their willingness to assist in every act of mercy and kindness, and your little niece, Sir, is a pattern for young persons." Brownrigg's eyes glistened at this news, he said, "he had seen her but once, and could not give an opinion, but he was glad that she had conducted herself so as to merit his notice." By this time they had reached the street, and were drawing near the cottage. "I fear, Sir, I have taken you out of your way." "No,

indeed," said Mr. Lascelles, "I was going past the very door."

They were all in order to receive their brother, and had a dish of tea in readiness for him. "Thank you, thank you," said the good-natured man, "but I have breakfasted, and since that been to your parson's, who walked with me to your door. I like him much: he seems a judicious, sensible man, and a fine looking man too." "Oh, brother, he is indeed a good man," said Mary, "I think you'll be pleased to hear him preach, and he is very kind to his parish, visiting the sick, and he gives away a great deal; and his wife is always doing something for the good of the poor." "That's all as it should be," said Mr. Brownrigg, "I like to see black coats in their duty; I give my guinea very willingly where I live, for the support of an afternoon sermon, though I cannot say much in favour of our lecturer. I believe the man means well, but when one has just had one's dinner, that equal humdrum tone in which he reads his sermon, almost puts me in mind of a line in Gray's *Elegy*,

'And drowsy tinklings lull the distant fold,'

and it's quite an effort to me to keep awake."

M. Why then, brother, do you not go

where you can hear something more animating?

B. Do you think I would leave my parish church? No, I've always been a true churchman.

Esther. Well, uncle, I think you'll be pleased to hear Mr. Lascelles; he is so excellent a preacher, and so very kind.

Mr. B. You're remarkably well off. I'm delighted with your young farmer, such a steady, respectable young man, I have not seen for some time; and his maid is a pattern of good housewifery and order.

Margaret. That she is indeed, brother, I have known Betty Smith from a child, and she is so faithful and honest.

Mr. B. I suppose she has a pretty good place of it.

Margaret. There's a good deal to do, brother, she has all the dairy to mind, only she has a girl under her, and I believe she works for her master.

Esther. Oh, aunt, you forget; Mr. Kemp puts out his plain work.

Margaret. Ah true, child, but I believe she mends for him; Betty Smith has seen great reverses, brother, she was not born for hard labour; but then she is such a contented creature, that she is satisfied with all the divine appointments.

Mr. B. That is right, that is what every body should be.

Mary. True brother, but that's not always easy to practise.

Mr. B. Oh! perhaps not. Pray do you know a person of the name of Walker, a clergyman. I made an acquaintance lately, and I am anxious to hear more of him, have not met so pleasant a gentleman"—— Esther looked up, "Does he live at P——, uncle?" "Yes," here Mr. B. related his adventure, and the history of Mrs. Potter, and Esther's varying countenance, for she now and then looked up from her work upon her uncle, gave him great pleasure, and he said to himself, "Sweet, sensible looking creature! Well, "I'm an active being; you must give me "something to do; if you don't find work "for me, I shan't stay with you."

Margaret. What kind of work, brother, would you like to do?

Mr. B. Why, I can dig your garden, sow your seeds; I can make trellis work if you have any wood. I think a little over your door would improve it very much, (they were all of the same opinion,) and I could read to you.

Mary said, "that would be delightful, brother."

Mr. B. "Have you any books?" Mary

replied, "Not many, but they had kind friends who would lend them some." So the little party seemed establishing in good harmony, and Mr. B. was beginning to taste the delights of family union, and Esther soon won his affections by her modest, unobtruding manners, her industry, and her duty to her parent.

Things were in this train, Mr. B. going up every evening to the Brow, and returning the following morning before breakfast, when James Brown called in with a message from Mr. Lascelles to Margaret, to ask her to step to the rectory. "Nothing the matter I hope, James Brown?" "Nothing that I know of. No, I believe it's something, some charity or other, because my mistress was sitting in the greenhouse this morning, they were talking in a low tone together, and then my master desired me to step for you." "Oh, very well," said Margaret, "I'll be with his reverence directly; I'll just put on a clean apron, James Brown, and get my bonnet, do not stop, child, for I shall walk too slow for you."

James. "Oh, you need not heed that, Mrs. Beal." "No, child, go, I'd rather come by myself." James departed, and now all eyes were turned to Margaret to know if any thing was the matter. "I don't know

till I get there; you shall hear all about it when I come back, that is to say, if I'm at liberty to mention it." "That is a very good clause, Margaret," said her brother. The honest woman smiled, and departed.

Nothing is indifferent to a mind under the influence of religion, as is beautifully observed in a little work designed for children; 'Eyes and no eyes, or the difference of a walk, to a mind awake to the beauties of nature, and a mind stupidly inclosed in a body, moving mechanically.' Every neighbour Margaret met awakened some interest, for the spirit of love dwelt in her bosom. If they were indifferent, she sighed for them, if they were alive to their eternal interests, there was the sacred union, the tie of sisterhood, and the dear old Christian had a kind word for all. She met the little ones coming from the school, and it was, Well dears, good children, I hope. Oh, how differently does the Christian, warmed with the sense of God's pity and compassion, walk through this wilderness world; how different to the mere moral character, who looks with the every day vacancy on every object; how full of life and vitality is every moment of existence; how important to some, indifferent to none. Time bears us on, but not heedlessly, and while Margaret obeyed

the call of her pastor, she was moving to provide for persons for whom she was not naturally interested.

James Brown waited at the garden gate, and led Margaret to the green-house, where Mr. Lascelles was sitting, and he placed a seat for her. "Well, Mrs. Beal," said Mr. Lascelles, "you see when a carpenter wants to work, he naturally looks for his tools, and if he wants to do any thing particularly nice, he takes care that those tools should be well tempered and in good order. My Mentoria wants to set idle people to work, and we have been looking out for somebody who is willing to do a good work, and in it there must be something of the spirit and temper of our *Divine Master*, for the benefit must be conferred on the unthankful and the evil." All this time Margaret had kept bowing her head, and saying, "Yes, Sir," and "Yes, Sir," and as Mr. Lascelles closed, she inquired, "And what, Sir, would you please to have me to do?" "Is it possible for your niece to take an apprentice, Mrs. Beal? Because I have been thinking that if she would instruct one of the Miss Jennings's, it might be a means of those poor girls providing for themselves, and giving some help to their father and mother."

Margaret. I don't know, Sir, what my niece would say to it, for she is such a modest young creature, that she would be ashamed to teach those who from situation in life might be expected to know more than she does.

Mr. Lascelles. Oh, she may put aside all that false humility; if ignorance is a recommendation, I can venture to say we are not deficient. No, no, we are excellently gifted there.

Margaret. Sir, my brother is come to stay with us a little while, and we could not well make any change while he is in the house; but this I promise you, that when he is gone, every thing in Esther's power she will gladly do; and yet, (said this good woman, looking thoughtfully,) to speak what I think, Sir, (and here she paused,) would it not take the little bit of bread out of my Esther's mouth, Sir? You know she lives by her work, Sir, and to be sure, Farmer Jennings's daughters being born and bred here, it's natural to think people would employ them.

Mr. Lascelles. Margaret, we would not hurt your niece I am sure upon any consideration. Modest, good girl, and a pious girl too. My thought was, that it would afford her an opportunity of being use-

ful, and that is a great satisfaction, Margaret.

Margaret. Yes, I'm sure, Sir, Esther would think so; but you see my poor sister half depends on her fingers, and indeed I don't think the Miss Jennings's would condescend to learn of my Esther, they be sad, proud damsels.

Mrs. L. shook her head, she knew the truth of this, and the good pastor, after taking two or three reflective turns in his green-house, and picking some faded leaves from the orange trees, said, "While I thought I could do both parties a service, I was desirous of this; but I see Margaret is right, and it would be injuring Esther to serve them, which you must know was far from my intention."

Margaret. "Oh no, Sir, that I'm sure you would not hurt a hair of her head," and Margaret Beal made her curtsy and retired. Scarcely had she cleared the gate of the Rectory, when she met Miss Louisa Jennings. She was so dressed, and with a parasol in her hand, had more the appearance of a lady of fortune and independence, than of a young woman who was about to make her way in life: if she had not spoken to Margaret, Margaret had not known her. The latter carefully avoided saying any thing of the conversa-

tion she had just had, and indeed she meant to be equally silent at home. She knew Esther's good will, and how little she thought of consequences.

As soon as she entered her neat little dwelling, her good-natured brother began. "Well, dame Margaret, and so you have been paying morning visits?" "Yes, brother, I have; I have been to see our good clergyman." "He seems a friendly man, and preaches plainly to the people; and he considers the poor. This looks well." "Yes, indeed, the poor are not overlooked here, brother. There is many a Minister that have not got so much right to think highly of himself as ours, that can't stoop to speak a word to a poor person. You know our Mr. L. is a high-born man, and uncommonly well bred."

Mr. B. There is one thing I am afraid of, Margaret; and that is, that he is a friend of Methodism.

M. I'm sure, brother, I don't know what he is a friend to; but I know I can always find his doctrine, his faith, and his practice, in the Bible, and that is the only sure word of testimony.

Mr. Brownrigg was so increasingly pleased with his niece, that he had lingered till the middle of October, when he began to think he ought to look at his home, to see

after his little Peggy, who had no one to counsel and direct her but Mrs. Tucker. This good creature had done as she would be done by, seen Peggy most days, and had her to dinner on Sundays. Mr. B. wanted to ascertain whether he might be likely to be received constantly as an inmate with his sisters, if he could build him an house large enough to lodge them all comfortably ; but this was a matter he knew not how to propose ; for he could not easily brook a refusal. So he sounded them ; asked if they had any fears in winter ? They assured him no, and he was beat off from every distant hope, and began to value the residence more highly now, as it was likely he was about to lose it ; but it was time he decided upon something ; and while balancing in his mind what this decision should be, Esther, in the simplicity of her heart, said, “ Dear uncle, how we shall miss you ! ” She had been his companion, almost every day, in his walks round the parish, and he insisted on her accepting many nice additions to her wardrobe ; so that though still plainly dressed, it was her uncle’s pleasure she should appear as his niece. Common report soon settled her as heir to her uncle ; but we, who know more of his mind than the public, are aware that he was a man very peculiar in

his way of thinking ; that he held out no golden hopes ; but waited and studied the characters he dwelt with. Yet, notwithstanding all this prudence, this amiable young creature had made strong impressions on his firm mind, and she had brought about what her mother never could. She had gradually led him to listen to that doctrine which offends every Pharisee, (original sin,) and she ventured to say, "Well, uncle, we will give it up, and own ourselves mistaken, if you can find one human being living, or recorded in the page of history, who never sinned ;" and thus they ended every discussion. Mr. B. saying, she must have a very wicked heart to be so uncharitable ; and Esther owning, that from what she knew of herself, she must think, judging by Scripture rule, that the doctrine of human depravity was a truth which could not be controverted. "You, my dear uncle, are full of benevolent feeling ; and dispositions of that sort are so happy in themselves, and so overflowing with good-will to others, that they are but too apt to place all excellence in that one quality ; whereas, you know, there are many doors at which sin enters ;" which she forbore to particularize, fearing to go too far ; and to offend him whom she wished much to persuade. The change in Est-

her's appearance, since her uncle's arrival, raised her in the opinion of every light mind. The Miss Jennings's began to wonder that they had not perceived before, how very genteel a person Esther was; and then this rich old uncle would leave her a fortune. "Well, to be sure, some people are in luck."

The minds of the village were in this train, when Mr. B. went to London; and, as they kept no servant, and Esther made no confidences of what passed in her own family, they were greatly at a loss what to conjecture. It was the opinion of some, that the old gentleman and his sisters could not agree. This conjecture was soon furnished with a requisite dialogue; and some little eaves-dropper having heard the uncle say to the niece, "Well, child, we must agree to differ;" spread the report, and it was soon current that Mr. B. had gone away in great anger, and meant to leave all his property to his housekeeper. The Miss. J.'s were soon in possession of all that invention could furnish; and their mother meeting Betty Smith, the following dialogue was held. "I'm very sorry to hear that the nice old gentleman, your lodger, is gone away." (*Betty Smith.*) "Why, my master never had a lodger." "Oh, dear; why, I thought he

had. Why, has not that Mr. Brownstigg been lodging at your house for this two months?" "If you mean Mr. Brownrigg Margaret Beal's brother, master did by him what he does by every body else; he did him a good turn when he wanted it." "Oh, dear; well, I thought your master had let his lodgings."

Mrs. J., though a very good natured woman to her own family, feeling her circumstances change, was delighted to bring others to her level. More particularly, since he had declined the family compact, she took a pleasure in lowering the Kemp family in any way she could.

Betty. Oh, tisn't that my master would be above letting lodgings, or doing any thing else that is right, but he has not done it, that's all.

Mrs. J. Well, I'm very sorry, however, for Margaret Beal and her sister, and that neat young creature, Esther.

Betty. Why, what are you sorry about, Mrs. Jennings?

Mrs. J. Oh, I hear there has been a fine to do. You know, I cannot tell any thing but what they tell me; this is what I hear. Two or three days before the uncle went off, says he to Esther, says he, 'we can't agree, and so we must differ;' and Esther said something coaxing, that

could not be made out ; but that did not work any change in the uncle ; for he went off just the same.

Betty Smith (laughing.) Dear, dear ; why, Mrs. Jennings, the world's just the same as it was when you and I were young ; not a bit better, that I see. I don't believe a word of their quarreling ; it seemed to me, that nice good-natured old man, was particularly fond of Esther, and I don't doubt but she'll have every shilling he has in the world, and that will be something very handsome ; for my master said, by what he could hear, the old gentleman's prejudices against religion were greatly removed, since he had come down. He seemed to speak very high of Mr. Lascelles and his lady ; and by what he talked of doing to help the charities here, he must have a pretty fortune.

Mrs. J. Oh, then, I dare say your master will be setting his cap at Miss Esther.

Now Betty Smith had a great deal of plain good sense, and did not intend Mrs. J. to go away with that idea ; at the same time it was the thing she had always wished ; so she said, “ I pray you, Mrs. J., not to have that notion ; and, above all, never to say that I helped you to it ; it would be very unbecoming in me, my master's servant, to be meddling in such

matters. So I pray you not to carry away such a report as this from me, Mrs. J. now mind you, I never said it; and you are the first person I ever heard say it, and now mark me for I tell you in time, if I should hear it, I will go strait to Mr. Lascelles and tell him that you are the person that set it about the parish; for I would not leave my place for something." Mrs Jennings was rather frightened at Betty Smith's manner, for she coloured up very high with the exertion; so she said, "Oh, dear me, Mrs Smith, I would not do you an ill turn for the world, and good morning to you;" for she was glad to get off.

Just at that moment, in came her master; he saw that something was the matter, and requested to know it. Betty kept looking about in her own peculiar manner, and then up at him in distress. "Why Betty, what can that foolish woman have been saying to you, to vex you so sadly."—"Sir, she have vexed me, and that is true;" and Betty told her master the whole story from beginning to end. He smiled. "Well, Betty, and what harm is there in all this; why should you be so very much fluttered? suppose I were to think of Esther Humphries, would there be any thing wrong in it?" "Dear me, no master, not at all; but I know

it would be wrong in me to meddle in such matters." "You are very right. I should think such interference an improper liberty, thinking on you as I do, Betty. Yet faithfully attached to my interests, and travelling, as I think and hope, to the same blessed country, I should not scruple to speak to you of such an affair; and to prove the sincerity of what I say, I will tell you, that I have thought of Esther Humphries, and I am happy to tell you her mother knew this eight months since, though it has never been mentioned to her; but it has been a great relief to my mind, since her uncle came down that I had mentioned it. I have only waited to free myself of every encumbrance before I married, and to be enabled to keep another servant under you, so that I may never part with you, my faithful Betty, while I live. Now, you who know so well what is proper, will see the propriety of not mentioning what I have said to you."

"Oh, master, you are all goodness, that you should think about me. I am sure I don't deserve it; I don't say I have not been an honest servant, master, for I have; I won't tell any lies about it; but, that you should reward me so kindly, it is more than I could expect. It is my good God has put it into your heart.

All I can do, master, is to pray for you ; and, if God hears my prayer, you will be very happy, master.”

While Betty was thus pouring out the gratitude of her heart, and Michael listening to the honest effusion, he was casting about in his mind, to know in what way he could best serve her. He still thought, that to retain her, would be happiest for him and for herself, though the very warmth of her gratitude made him fear, that unless the kitchen folks were kind, her life would not be as happy as it had been : but he said to himself, that I must leave ; circumstances will prove whether I should do Betty a service. The postman brought a letter of grateful thanks from Mr. B. we will give the reader a sight of it.

“ Dear Sir. You know I left you under the old oak in the home close, and that you promised never to forget Jonathan Brownrigg. It's true I was obliged to ask this favour of you ; because you seem to have a knack of forgetting all the good deeds you perform, and I never heard you speak of any man whom you obliged. Now observe me, If you choose to be silent respecting me, I shall not follow that plan ; but tell all the folks that know me, how well you received me, and what a comfortable apartment you

destined for me ; but I will not say, though I do feel very grateful, that this is the cause of my writing to you. No, Mr. Kemp, I want you to tell me whether, in your village, there is such a thing as a bit of land to be disposed of ; free land, mind me. I should like to build myself a very comfortable small house. It must be pretty near the church, for I cannot afford to keep a carriage ; and, if I can coax my sister Mary and Esther and her aunt Beal, to leave the old place, and come to me, I shall be quite comfortable. I have said a word or two to my little Peggy ; who was so distressed at the thoughts of losing her cross old master, that I have consented to bring her down with me ; but all this is premature, till I know whether you can get the ground. You had better say nothing of this to my sisters ; there is no need to unsettle them ; I shall write to them by this post. Pray remember me to Betty Smith, and tell her that I have thought a great deal about her since I came away, and that I hope she'll not engage herself rashly, for she is a particular favourite of mine. I almost fell out on the road with a sad democrat, who is ready to govern the nation, and has not yet learned to govern himself. I asked him what it took to set up in his trade ? He

was ready to burst with passion, and inquired what I meant? I told him, that after my mind, it required a great deal of assurance, as much conceit, and very little sense, to reform the nation. I was certain there was not a pot boy in my neighbourhood, who had not a notion of it; that, for my own part, I kept but one maid, and was out of business; and that I found, to govern my small establishment, and make the most of the little property I have saved, took as much sense as I was master of; but, no doubt, there were men in every alley in London, who would be willing to do Parliament work, and to change places with the Prime Minister; but the worst of it is, you see, Sir, you can't all govern; some of you must obey; and that takes more sense than is lodged in the brain of any democrat. Now you may be sure he did not hear all this patiently; but I pinned him down to it, and told him that he might tell his friends at the club he had done that day what he never had done before, he had listened to the conversation of another. "And pray, Sir," said he, fiercely, "what do you know of me?" I told him, that when a man knew one democrat, he knew the whole party; that in that respect, they resembled a very different assembly; they all spoke the

same language, but that language was discontent; that if it were possible to grant them their wishes, they would be angry with the condescension. Luckily the coach stopped, and without one sign of amity, we parted. I know such a nest of them not far distant from my house, that if there was any rising I should not think my quarters the safest; but, however, they shall never make me hold my tongue; for who can tell, Sir, but one may have the happiness to bring them back to a sense of their duty. At least, the design is a good one, and deserves encouragement. When first these fellows made their appearance, and showed a willingness to mend the affairs of state, Mr Pitt very sensibly took cognizance of all their meetings; and I believe such was his vigilance, that he was thoroughly well acquainted with all the mischief. Now they may growl; but I think they are past biting. In the hope that I shall soon hear from you, and gain some intelligence respecting my estate,

I remain your obliged

and faithful servant,

JONATHAN BROWNRIGG."

P. S.—If there is any thing I can do for you in the city, be sure to let me know.

Michael was pleased with this letter;

he was a warm friend to government, but he was a little at a loss how to answer it, for his habits were entirely rustic, and he was aware of his deficiency in letter-writing ; so, as in all difficulties, he went to Mr. Lascelles, and shewed him the letter, which very much pleased him; for he said, “ Though a good subject is not always a good Christian, yet he must doubt the piety of those who rebelled against the powers that be. He said, it was easy to call this cant, and to settle the business, but he must ever regard it as a serious evil, and was astonished how any man who had tasted that the Lord is gracious, and knew the powers of the world to come, could delight in opposition for opposition’s sake. As he continued to read Brownrigg’s letter, he said, “ He is a plain man, but there seems sense and benevolence about him, and he appears to be very grateful, Mr. Kemp, for your kindness. I really think he might be an acquisition to us, and certainly must be a comfort to those poor creatures, Mary and her sister. I do not know the cause of their long separation, but it seems they have not met before for years.”—“ I have never heard, Sir,” said Michael; “ I know that he had never seen Esther till he came down here, and that her father died

when she was very young; and some ladies, in whose service he was, were very kind to the child, and had her instructed in all that was plain and useful." Mr. Lascelles, who understood human nature well, saw that Michael dwelt with pleasure on this part of his discourse; and though he did not observe upon it, he laid it aside in his mind, intending to compare other parts of his conduct. He had long thought that Michael ought to marry, because he saw that home was not delightful to him except when he was busy; that there was a loneliness in his dwelling, which, to a man who had always been in a family, must have a depressing effect. There was one part of Michael's character which Mr. Lascelles had yet to learn: he did not put on fine feelings, but he had plenty of them when occasion called them forth, and his usual habits were simple and natural; every object that presented itself to Michael's mind seemed to stand single; if they had been combined, they might often have misled him. Two very prominent subjects had that morning presented themselves to his thoughts, the removal of Mr. B. to the village, and his own settlement in life, and these had a natural connection, and in the eye of the world would have hinged upon each other; but with Mi-

chael they were as distinct as the conquest of Peru and Magna Charta. His preference for Esther had arisen entirely from the modesty of her appearance, from her industrious habits, her duty to her mother, and her quiet deportment in the house of God. There was no light wandering during service, no giddy gossiping before or after; her arm sustained her mother through the church-yard to the church, and the same respect was again offered when she quitted it; the other young people would be gathering in groups at one another's houses, but Esther stood an isolated being, except when she spoke to Fanny Meredith, or kissed little Michael as they passed from the porch together; and had Michael followed her home, he had been yet more gratified, for it was the habit of that cottage, as soon as they came from the church, to have the tea and the great Bible, and to recollect all that had been said in the sermon. "Now, aunt, do you try and remember the divisions, and I will remember the beginning if I can; and you, mother, take the application, and then we shall pretty near have it all, and if we can make it out together, I can write it down; and then what a rich store we shall have, for Mr. Lascelles's are beautiful sermons." As Esther was

saying this one Sunday, she saw her aunt smile, and she heard her say, "That's no matter;" and then she saw her shake her head, and heard her go on, saying, "No, no." At last Esther took courage, and she said, "Aunt, what is that?" Her aunt smiled again: "What do you want to know, Esther?"—"I want to know what you meant, aunt, when you said, it was no matter."—"Why, child, I meant that the beauty of the sermon was no matter to us? Are we better for it? Do we feel that the Holy Spirit carries it home to the heart? or do we hear as though we heard not? Do we go away, and forget what manner of beings we are. My poor dear man used to say, 'Margaret, we shall have a deal to account for, you and I; we have not been left in our ignorance, we have been well taught.' " It was thus that these good people endeavoured inwardly to digest what they had heard, and it is likely there was not a house in that village where the instructions of the good pastor were collected with more diligence; and what was the effect? It was this: the text on Sunday was, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." If work was slack, and Esther began to grow a little uneasy at having nothing to do,

and to fear that she should become burdensome to her kind aunt, she would refer her to the text, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." "Yes, aunt, but I should be unhappy to injure you."—"What did the reverend say, child? Did not he bid us be content with a state of dependence?"—"Yes, but, aunt, it would not be my duty to stay here if I was likely to become burdensome to you."—"Come, Esther, what says the Big Book? 'He that believeth shall not make haste,' that is to say—" Here Mary smiled. "You must go to the Big Book again, Margaret"—"Tarry thou the Lord's leisure, be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart." It were indeed an endless job to tell the reader all the Scripture references of these good people; this will suffice to show how they lived upon their Sunday's food through the week, and endeavoured to regulate their practice by the preaching of their excellent pastor.

Margaret Beal received an affectionate brotherly letter from Mr. Brownrigg, and as the latter part was characteristic, we will copy it. "I think you women must miss me sadly; there is something unnatural in a house where there is no male governor, but I've no thoughts of intruding on you

at present. Tell Esther that I desire she'll hold up her head and have a proper pride, for I think, as my niece, and one for whom I shall certainly provide, she has no right to humble to the Miss Jennings' or any of the misses around. I have a great regard for Esther, and I wish her to consider me as a friend; I have sent her by the coach some cloth to make her a pelisse, and as she is so handy with her needle and scissors, I suppose she will be able to make it up for herself. Tell Mr. Kemp, that if I should wish to come and see you again, I hope he will let me my old lodgings. I began to get used to him and Betty, and was very comfortable there; but I had Peggy at home waiting for me, who did every thing she could to get things in order against my return, and I do not well know how to part with her, though I think I shall make some change in my way of life. But one thing I shall never change, in true attachment to you, to Mary, and to Esther.

Yours. J. B."

They were greatly pleased with the kindness of this letter. "But dear me," said Margaret, "my poor brother and his proper pride. Do you think, Mary, he ever reads the Scriptures?"—"Why no, sister, I fear not; and if he does, it is with a view

to confirm himself in his own opinions, or to perform a duty to satisfy his conscience ; and I am very certain he will never think of applying the condemnatory part of the passages to his own state, he would never acknowledge that the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint ; nor does he believe, that whatsoever was written aforetime, was written for his instruction."

Esther. My dear mother, my dear aunt, I am very hopeful about my uncle, only let us be careful to give him no needless offence.

Mary. Well, Eshter love, you're in the right, there's no need to offend ; I am sure, if you speak to my brother in kindness and affection, he is not a man to harden himself against you.

Margaret. Well, 'tis a very remarkable thing how some people do forget ; I thought, that when people had been almost turned out of doors, they must have owned that there was some deep prejudice against real religion.

Mary only smiled, and repeated that text, " He hath blotted out my iniquities, as a cloud and as a thick cloud, my transgressions."

Margaret. True, child, and you do right in remembering, that " his arm is not shortened, neither is his ear heavy." But

who is that at the door?" Margaret rose and opened it: it was Fanny Meredith, with her boy at her side, and the baby in her arms. "Esther love, I called upon you to ask a great favour; my good man says, if he could get any one to take care at home, he would take me to see my father and mother for two days." The affair was settled by Mary Humphries promising to go; for poor Esther had seen so little of life, and being naturally timid, she was silent when the charge was proposed to her, and her mother, who knew her well, immediately offered to supply her place. So on the morrow, in a tilted cart, Fanny Meredith, with her kind good man and her little ones, set out on their expedition; and they did not go empty-handed, for Michael had ordered Betty Smith to put up a basket with varieties of the farm produce, and there was a label on the handle "For my good mother, with Michael Kemp's duty." Perhaps there are few pleasures so pure as revisiting the scenes of our early days, and Fanny felt it in its full force, for she was a warm-hearted young creature, and scarcely met a face that did not smile upon her in friendship, and Joe came out to meet her in his best clothes. It was a delightful welcome; that of the mother; there was no drawback, no

censure—it was honest approval and gratitude to God, recalling past mercies ; and the welcome to the little ones was most cordial. They were engaging children in themselves, and “ they are my Fanny’s,” gave them a double tie. Joe was out the greater part of the day at the nurseryman’s with his father, so that the fond mother and the duteous daughter had time to recall every particular, and to converse with the most delightful freedom. But the visit to the rectory was a pleasure stored in Fanny’s heart, and it was reciprocal ; for during her residence there, she had conducted herself so sweetly, that she was beloved by all : she was a happy compound of good-humour regulated by principle ; and the children too had their full share of welcome, and enjoyed themselves without reserve. Among other inquiries, Mrs. Potter was not forgotten, and she was found somewhat improved by her late misfortune. It was a seasonable relief, that which Mr. Walker brought her, and the friendship of Mrs. Tucker was a “ continual dropping which is said to be better than a hasty shower.” This pleasant little woman was often sending some trifle that she knew would be acceptable, and held intercourse with Mr. Walker as to its application. It was one day,

while Fanny was drinking tea in Miss Walker's little boudoir, and that young lady was pleasing herself in fitting out the young Stephen in a plaid vest and tunic, that a message was brought from below that a gentleman wished to see Mr. Walker; and if he was not at home, the person could leave his message with any branch of the family who could see him. Miss Sophia Walker was a timid girl, and could not think of going to him alone, and was rejoicing that she had Fanny with her, when the person in question walked in, stiffly bending to Miss Walker, and apologizing for intrusion on her privacy. Fanny looked up, and thought she knew his countenance; he looked at Fanny, and thought the same thing, when he thus addressed Miss Walker:

“ I am very little known, madam to your excellent father, but we were both interested for a person in this parish, and I am come expressly on the part of a friend of mine to serve an object not very worthy I believe, Mrs. Potter. I know not how she is going on, her conduct must regulate mine; if she is in some measure reformed, I bring what will be very acceptable; but Mrs. Tucker is fixed in her resolution to afford her no relief unless she is punctual at church, and has entirely

changed her habits. I believe, young lady, I had better reserve my inquiries till I have the honour and pleasure of speaking personally with your father, or perhaps your brother. Is he at home?"—"I think he is, Sir."

Miss Walker rang the bell. "Is Mr. Edmund at home?"—"Yes, madam."—"Will you say a gentleman wishes to speak with him?" Fanny sat playing with her children, and at last said, "I believe, Sir, I think, Sir, I know a very nice girl who will be very glad to hear that I have seen you, and seen you well—Esther Humphries."—"Ah, then I am right; it is Mr. Kemp's sister I am addressing."—"Yes, Sir, my name is Fanny Meredith, and your's, I believe, is Brownrigg." He bowed. Perhaps, Mrs. Meredith, you can tell me something of Mrs. Potter"—"I have not been long here, Sir."

Brownrigg. But by what I understand, your family live very near.

F. "That is true, Sir, but I never was at the Lion since I was eight or nine years old, I think; but I heard my mother mention that poor Mrs. Potter had been in some distress, and that a friend had settled her affairs for her."—"Yes, yes, there was something done, I believe, and more would be done if we could be certain that

the good lady was not fond of liquid fire." Fanny said, she would make any inquiries, and at this moment Mr. Edmund Walker entered, and Mr. Brownrigg requested the honour of speaking with him for a few moments; but they did not quit the room without taking notice of Fanny and the lovely little ones. Mr. Edmund W. knew little or nothing of Mrs. Potter, though his father had described the meeting with Mr. Brownrigg at Walworth; and so accurate had been his description, that Mr. Edmund thought he should have known Mr. Brownrigg any where. "If you wish to go to the Lion I will step with you, and you may judge for yourself." He acceded to this proposal, and Mrs. Potter, who was in the bar, said to a servant who stood by, "I wonder what brings Mr. Edmund Walker here, no good, I dare say." She had not time for a second observation, before Mr. Brownrigg begged for the honour of speaking with her.

Mrs. Potter. Oh, Sir, to be sure, Sir; private business, Sir?

Mr. Brownrigg. Why yes, Madam, perhaps we might as well walk to a private room; do you not think so, Sir?

Mr. Edmund bowed, and Mrs. Potter sniffed and tossed her head, and they followed her to a very respectable back room, where

hung a sword, a plaid cloak, and on the table some volumes of poems and several periodical publications. "Pray sit down, Sir; this is the captain's room, and here, Sir, you may say all your say, for there's nobody wont come here, for the captain's gone out, and this is always his private room when he's here; for, as he says, there is not such pleasant lodgings in all P—— as he gets at the Lion." How long Mrs. Potter might have gone on repeating the captain's praise of the Lion public-house cannot be known; for Mr. Brownrigg, who was a man of business, and not at all patient under long harangues, stopped her with, "No doubt, Madam, the captain has made a judicious choice; but as this gentleman is unknown to us, we will, if you please, proceed to business."

Mrs. P. Oh dear, yes, Sir, to be sure; shall I fetch an inkstand?

Mr. B. "No, Madam, I thank you, my memory will serve me;" and here Mr. Brownrigg buttoned his coat tight, pulled off his gloves, rubbed his hands, and after keeping his eyes cast down for a few moments, he looked full on Mrs. Potter, and asked her if she went to church.

Mrs. P. To church, Sir; dear me, what a very strange question—To church! Pray

Sir, what business can it be of your's, Sir, whether I goes to church?

Mr. B. None in the world, Madam; but as the person from whom I come makes *that question*, and your reply, the foundation of some very important business, I just took the liberty to ask it; but should it be unpleasant to you to answer it, my business is ended. (And here he drew on his gloves.) I wish you a *very* good afternoon.

Mrs. P. Dear me, (and she looked with an eye of scrutiny on Mr. B.) Don't I remember you?

Mr. B. Really, Madam, that is for you to determine, and not very material—I remember *you*.

Mrs. P. Are you not Jonathan Brownrigg?

Mr. B. I was christened Jonathan, but your uncle used to call me Mr. Brownrigg.

Mrs. P. Well then, Mr. Brownrigg, I'd be glad to know what's the reason as you wishes to know if I'm always at the church?

Mr. B. No reason whatever, Madam! I wish you a very good afternoon; (and he was making towards the door, when she said in a tone half pettish, half coaxing,) "Why, Mr. Brownrigg, if you've got any thing to say for my good, I'll willingly listen."

B. No, Madam; till you have the goodness to answer my inquiry, I have no message further.

Mrs. P. Well, to be sure I'd be glad to know what you're come about. Why, let me see; why, I think I was at the church last Sunday was fortnight. (She rings the bell, the maid comes in)—“Judy, wasn't I at church last Sunday *fortnight*.”

Judy. I'm sure, Ma'am, I can't say; I haven't been here but a week last Saturday.

Mrs. P. Dear, no, girl; no more you have, I forgot that. Well, it's no matter, but I'm sure I was there last Sunday fortnight.

Brownrigg. Some particular occasion, I suppose; perhaps you stood godmother, Madam?

Mrs. P. Dear, how came you to know that, Sir? I did, to be sure, for the first time.

Edmund Walker looked up, and said, “that was very extraordinary.” And Mrs. P. looked round with inquiry, as to what was extraordinary; and Mr. B. looked the same inquiry. “Why, Sir, my father is very particular, I know, upon this subject.” Here Mrs. P. broke in—“Your father is particular enough upon all subjects, Master Edmund.” E. Walker, whose mind was of a very superior cast, was not at all disposed to enter into an argument with such a per-

son as Mrs. Potter. But Mr. B. said, "In what is your father particular, Mr. Walker?" and to him the young man replied, "In not admitting persons to stand who do not frequent the church."—"Very right, very right," said Mr. B., and he fell back in his chair with his eyes fixed full on Mrs. P., to her no small mortification.

Mrs. P. Well, I do think that this is the most extraordinariest thing I ever heard, that a man should come all the way from Lunnan to know whether I goes to church;"—and Mr. Brownrigg, who could hardly help laughing at the struggle between Mrs. P.'s interest and her temper, wished her a very good afternoon for the third time, and left the house. As the gentlemen walked on together, Edmund Walker recollected that a neighbouring clergyman had offered to take the duty at the time Mrs. Potter was at church, so that it was accounted for. "Well, I have learnt thus much," said Mr. B., "by my visit to Mrs. Potter; she is not the least improved, and the person for whom I make the inquiry was willing, in case she had been, to have left the whole of her late uncle's property to her: but it appears to me, that she is saucy enough without wealth, and I shall advise sending her a mall yearly present, but by no means to enrich her."—"And now, Sir," said Mr.

B., "I must beg you to present my respects to your father, and I have no occasion to trouble you further." So they parted, not without inquiring where old Kemp lived. "I wish you had asked me before," said Mr. E., "we were exactly opposite his cottage when we were at the Lion."—"I thank you, I shall easily find it." Sarah opened the door, when Mr. B. knocked at it. "I see I am right," said he; "Is your mother at home?"—"No, Sir, she is just gone to see a sick neighbour, but she will be in presently." So Mr. B. seated himself. "I am going some way off, and I shall be very likely to see a brother of your's; have you any message for him?"—"My love, if you please, Sir, and we should all be happy to see him this way."—"Have not you another brother?"—"Yes, Sir, two; I have one quite grown up, my brother Joe; but I don't expect you will see him, Sir; but if you will please to write down on paper any thing you have to say."—"No, little maid, I have nothing very particular, but I should have liked to carry some news."—"Oh, Sir, my sister is here, thank you."—"True, I met her at Mr. W.'s" As Mr. Brownrigg rose to go, Mrs. Kemp returned, and Mr. B. explained in few words, "that he should soon see her son, and would very gladly convey any tidings."—"I thank you,

Sir, only say the Lord prospereth us on every side ; that Joseph is a very good lad, and I would be glad of a service for my Jane, if he should hear of one. We are all in good health, Sir, and that is no small mercy.”

Brownrigg, though he had been often angry with his sister for speaking of the Lord and his mercy, was now in a temper to receive any communication patiently. Mrs. Kemp was so mild, so neat, and so pretty, that he could forgive a little enthusiasm, and he looked benevolently, and promised to think of all her pleasant messages. He well knew Michael’s sentiments, he saw they were all agreed, and he did not object ; he only begged they would not oblige him to speak in set phrases, and to lift up his eyes, as though he was always praying, and Margaret Beal said in her last converse with him, that till his heart went with his eye, she should be very sorry to see any thing of that sort. “ There is no doubt, brother, many hypocrites are found looking upward ; but when we remember what we look towards when the eye is thus employed, surely, my dear brother, you need not be so very angry that a traveller, who has his home in view, should sometimes cast an eye towards it.” “ No, no, Margaret, ’tis not that they should look up, but that they should expect to be thought

the better for it, and have their hands in your pocket while they sigh and whine." "You are a very unlucky man, brother, *I* never saw such persons." The fact was, Brownrigg had spent his life in the exercise of formal duty, and had never inquired whether his weekly visits to the house of prayer had any other end than the repetition of words, without any reference to the heart. He was strictly moral and honest in word and deed, but he never thought of God in his dealings with man. If he read his Bible, it was with no farther end than to do a duty, and of course it was heavy work; and to see a person lift their eyes when they read that passage in the Psalms, he thought it stuff, and hypocrisy, little knowing how two or three lines of Scripture trusted in and believed in, could comfort a mind cast down and distressed, and when thus applied, becomes a balm to the wounded conscience. But he was a whole man, he had never been pierced by the arrows of conviction, and had not any need of consolation. What *he* felt not he thought no one beside felt; and what would have been hypocrisy in him, he consequently thought would be the same in another. He was full of kindness to his fellow men, and would have exerted himself to serve any one; but then all

these actions were viewed by him as claims to a seat in heaven. But let it be remembered, "it cost more to redeem a soul, he must let that alone for ever."

Michael had made some impression on the mind of Brownrigg, not by conversation, but by conduct: he had heard of his allowing voluntarily one hundred pounds per annum to Mrs. Finch, and while he slept at the Brow, he saw the quiet and respectable order of his dwelling, the obedience of his servants, and their love to him; and all this pleased him, because he understood it, but why he should make them all assemble to prayers he could not see. Could not they all pray in their own chambers? He did not quite like that, it seemed like boasting of his religion. To be brief, the *appearance* of piety was offensive to him, every acknowledgment of God he held to be cant; but every kind notice of his fellow-men, even though publicly done, he approved. How plainly in this man did enmity appear—sad to say, enmity against him who formed him, against him who redeemed him, and yet he would have said in the spirit of those whom our Saviour mentions, as replying at the last day, "Lord, when saw we thee, &c. &c." Like Saul, he persecuted ignorantly, and thought he did God service, he flung the raiment

of hypocrisy at all, because he found one or two hypocrites. Thus it is frequently seen the tares and the wheat are blended, "let both grow together until harvest;" then shall ye discover between the righteous and the wicked, &c. &c.

Journies are frequently fatiguing in themselves, and unless full of novel interest, are doubly so in recital. We will therefore suppose Brownrigg entering the cottage of his sister, and anticipating the pleasure of seeing his niece, to whom he had become greatly attached; however, there was no one at home but Margaret, and he was greatly disappointed to find Esther and her mother out, and half angry to be told they were gone to a lecture at the rectory. He sat fretting and fidgetting, and the more displeased, the more his conscience told him he had no right to be angry. "What, don't ye go to church on Sunday? Why, is not that enough? What's the good of having the head crammed with sermons? I am sure, for my part, I can never remember them I hear on Sundays." Margaret was silent, she saw it was no time to reply; but, says the zealous reader, ought she not to have replied? ought she not to have pleaded that cause, in which she was so deeply interested? "There is a time for every thing," says

the wise man, and in nothing is the time more to be studied than in religious counsel. To convince an angry man, it is wrong to be angry, involves no small difficulty; but to remove prejudice, and anger at once, is a hopeless undertaking, so she simply said, "I am sure, brother, they would not have gone out if they had expected you;" and this little speech, though it made no impression at the moment, sunk upon his heart like an effort of kindness; and if it did not entirely remove his displeasure, he felt it was unjust to be angry with Margaret, who was at home; and while he was planning what he should say to the stragglers, they returned, and Michael Kemp with them. Reader, you have doubtless seen a heavy cloud pass over your head, and a brilliant sun break from behind it in splendour. Poor Brownrigg was so pleased that he was obliged to quit the room, after having shaken hands with Michael, and bid welcome to his sister and niece, and stepping into the garden, relieved his mind by these short exclamations. "Yes, yes, that will do, I like that very much; well, there's no harm, some at the ball, some at the races, some at church; there's no harm at all, only I do not like people to be over religious." Having spent his first emotions of joy, he returned to the cottage, leaving

Margaret in some surprise at his sudden good humour. Michael possessed himself very well, and said, "I am glad, Sir, I called this evening; perhaps you will do me the favour of accompanying me home." "Why indeed, unless this cottage has been enlarged, Mr. Kemp, I must beg a bed of you;" and he fully expected that Michael would unfold the mystery of his visit. But no, not a word: he little knew the character of our hero, who knowing Brownrigg was rich, and to have made a friend of him in the present instance would have been asking a fortune, and this was a step of which he was incapable. No, he regarded Esther simply for her own worth, and since he found himself not unacceptable to her, had consulted no being but her mother. Greatly was Brownrigg disappointed at Michael's persevering silence, and he hurried down next morning from the Brow, that he might gain intelligence from his Sisters. "Very odd, very extraordinary, I think" he muttered to himself as he walked along, "the girl has no father; why, I'm her nearest male relation. Very odd; very extraordinary."

Esther met him at the cottage door, and told him how glad she was to see him. He took the first opportunity of her quitting the room, to question his sisters what

that young man was there for last night. "I believe brother," said Margaret, "I believe he has a kindness for our Esther." "Well, well, I have no objection ; but, should not he have spoken to me ? Was not that natural ?" "Oh, yes ; quite natural, I think," said Margaret, smiling ; "but—" "But what ?" "Mr. Kemp would never speak to you, brother." "And pray, why not ?" "Because you are a rich man, brother." "Who says I am a rich man ?" "The world says so." "And suppose I am, is that a reason why I am to be treated with no respect ?"

Mary Humphries now went up to her brother, and taking his hand, said, "My dear Jonathan, I'm sure Mr. Kemp had but one reason for not speaking to you ; he thought it would seem as if he expected a portion with our Esther. Oh, brother, he is not a common young man, I do assure you, he's got such a generous heart." "Well, well, I don't understand it ; it's a great deal too fine for me. I should like him to have spoken to me. I tell you, I like to be consulted ; I've a right."

Mary. Most certainly you have. But there is an extreme in most minds ; and Mr. Kemp has certainly erred, through fear of selfishness. I wish you could see it in the right light, and then I think you

would esteem it. (*B.*) “ Well, my dear ; well, perhaps I should ; and, if he don’t choose to speak, why then, you know, I’ve nothing to answer.”

Mary. Only let me beg, brother, that you will not be angry with them.

B. Oh, no child.

Esther came in soon after and put an end to the conversation.

Some weeks passed, during which time Brownrigg was busily engaged in planning his cottage. It was certainly not very elegant, but very neat and convenient ; but he was much put out, with the prospect of Esther’s leaving her mother’s wing, for he had made up his mind to have her as an inmate ; and, though he loved his sisters, he thought them rather of the gravest. He was a man naturally of a gay spirit ; and to be obliged always to think of his words, before he uttered them, was to him slavery. He loved dearly to say a droll thing, and join the laugh it occasioned ; he loved to communicate freely, and to be confided in and consulted in return : but the modesty of Esther, and the generosity of Michael, were such barriers as time only could remove ; and, after some moments’ cogitation, he would close it by uttering aloud, “ Well I can’t help it ; if they won’t, they won’t.” In the mean

time, Margaret could not but regret that her dear Esther was in danger, unintentionally, of offending; and Michael, whose integrity they could not hope to shake, was likely to pursue his own silent course, without any interruption. The person most disposed to break the spell was Margaret. She could not bear that they should lose from foolish delicacy, so she went to the Brow Farm, with a determination to speak openly to Michael. She found him at home; and, wondering at her visit, for she was an old woman, and the walk to the Brow was very fatiguing, so he offered her a glass of alder wine, and a slice of seed cake, and in an anxious voice, hoped there was nothing amiss? "Nothing at all, nothing at all; only I want to prevent mischief?" When Michael understood the cause of her visit, he promised to remove Mr Brownrigg's vexation as far as he was concerned; so in the evening of that very day, he sought Brownrigg and was completely explicit with him. This last inquired why he did not tell him all this long since? "I believe, Sir, you guess," said Michael; "I have enough to keep a wife, and it is not my desire to enrich myself by impoverishing others. You have been very kind to Esther, Sir, and I cannot desire more than her affection: it is

the best fortune a wife can bring." "Well, all this is very fine; but, as I don't chuse my niece to live completely on your bounty, I intend giving her a thousand pounds; and you either have half of it in your business, or I will secure it all to her. What say you?" "I think, Sir, it will be far best that it should be secured. So the matter was settled; and Mr. B., whose delicacy in conferring a benefit, was as great as theirs in receiving it, had the necessary business settled without farther consultation.

The Jennings's had long been endeavouring to get sociable with Esther. They had called to ask favours of her, and had pressed her to come and visit them; but all this was too sudden, and Esther's plain sense was frequently puzzled to know what they could have in view; but she lent them patterns of different things with the frankest kindness, without her ever being informed for what purpose they were wanted. At length Margaret Beal said, "I really think, Esther, dear, that those Miss Jennings's are going to set up in business; and, if you don't take care they will win all your custom." Esther thought it extraordinary; but she had nothing of that selfishness in her nature, which is necessary to persons in business.

The secret of this indifference was, that she built her hopes of success where she rested every other hope, and she knew that the arm on which she leaned was able to support her, and she formed no other dependance.

In the mean time, Michael had called on his sister, and almost surprised her with his unreserved confidence. She persuaded him to end the business shortly, and said to him, "I am sure it will be happier for you, my love, to bring her home soon, and I see no reason why you should defer it."

There was that in Michael's character, which led him to consider every human being with whom he stood connected; the law of kindness was not only upon his lips, but it was in his heart; and he began to consider whether the step he was about to take, might not affect Betty Smith's happiness; whether she might like to live where there was a mistress; and, after some little hesitation, as she was one morning making his tea, he said, "Betty, you have been a great comfort to me." "I'm very glad Sir; "I'm sure you have been a kind friend to me, Sir." "It's not unlikely, Betty, that some change may take place in my life, which perhaps might change yours, and affect

your comfort." "Sir, master," said Betty, and she looked up in her own peculiar manner, "No change can take place in your life, or mine, without the peculiar guidance of the Lord; and I'm not one, master, to carve for myself. I remember a great gentleman said, in a book I read once, that 'when God's people do carve for themselves, they generally cut their fingers?' No Sir, whatsoever is done in the earth, he is the doer of it. I am not afraid of him, Sir, nor of you, my master; you'll both take care of me, I know." This sweet confidence of Betty Smith's opened the heart of Michael, and he told her his intentions. "Well, dear me," said she, "and I'm glad of it; for often when I've seen you looking at the fire on a winter's evening, I've thought to myself, dear me, I be no company for him; and when you bid me sit down, I've been ashamed, and thought I was not proper company. Dear me, Sir, I'm very glad; dear me, Sir, I think you've done very proper; they are particular nice people, Sir; a religious family, very kind hearted, old friends of mine, Sir; companions, I may say, of my youth. Ye see, master, I love ye, I'm sure, like my son;" and the tears streamed down Betty's cheeks; "and I'm glad as my life, that ye are like to settle so com-

fortable ; and I dare say as the good lady, your mother, is glad too." Michael smiled. "Why, Betty, my mother as yet knows nothing of it." Betty looked surprised. "Why, to be sure," said she, accounting to herself for this omission, "It is a long way off;" and, after a little hesitation, she began to smile. "Well, Betty, what are you thinking of?" (*Betty.*) "The Miss Jennings's. I was thinking what Miss Louisa, and Miss Tiny would say, when they have quite lost ye." "Lost me, Betty!" "Why, yes, master; they certainly counted to get ye. I should have been sorry for that, master, and I think you'd have been sorry in the end." Michael smiled, and hoped Miss Jennings's would be quite as well provided for.

He now began to consider, as Mr Lascelles had always been so friendly to him and Esther, that he ought to repose some confidence in him. He knew this was an awkward task, and almost shrank from it; however he was determined he should have it from himself; so he walked across the fields, and beat his way to the Rectory. He had no idea that any one had heard of it out of their own family; but, perhaps they might, ere long. As he drew near the avenue of trees, which we described as approaching Mr Lascelles's residence, he

was met by James Brown, whose steady course did honour to the principles which he had embraced. "And how is it we never meet, Michael?" Michael replied that "he knew not: for that he should always be glad to see him." "But where is your master? I've a little business for him." "I saw him a few minutes since and he passed to the house."

He was admitted to the study; and, after some slight apology for intruding his affairs he unfolded his business, and begged the prayers of his beloved pastor. Mr. Lascelles was exceedingly pleased, he thought the union so well assorted; and said, "I suppose the uncle, Mr Brownrigg, is acquainted with your intention?" "Yes, Sir, and he has behaved very kindly, and promised to give Esther £1000." "Very good,; that is as it should be. It will assist you in your business." "I rather think not, Sir, as I should not wish it in my hands. The Brow has hitherto paid its expenses, and something over for a rainy day. I am always afraid, lest I should be in haste to get rich. I have been so happy in my middle state, that I fear advancement, lest I should lose my dependance." "Very right," replied his reverend friend; "the less a man is loaded, the lighter he walks;

and I believe the love of accumulation increases by indulgence. Money is a more difficult article to manage, than most young people are aware of. I have known persons who have begun by prudence, end in parsimony; and, on the other hand, I have seen liberality degenerate into profusion. Oh, my dear young man, keep your eye fixed on the Saviour; that is the only way to walk consistently."

Michael listened modestly; for though he had long felt this, and long practised it, he was not like some young persons, impatient with the reflection. Counsel was agreeable, especially religious counsel, and he was willing to take here a little, and there a little, and to receive "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" so that he might walk safely, and honourably to the cause of God.

He withdrew with the hearty blessing of the good Mr. Lascelles, and went quietly home to the Farm. He was just ascending the hill, when it struck him that he should do well to call, and have some open conversation with the whole family, with whom he was about to connect himself. He went to Margaret Beal's; and, as she opened the little garden gate, Esther met him. "You were going out." "Yes, but it is not material." "You are

sure of that, Esther"—“Quite sure especially if you——” And she hesitated. Michael turned round, and said, “I’ll walk a little way with you. Is your uncle within?” “No; he is gone to his cottage, and I was going to call on a sick neighbour.” “Could you take me?” “Yes; and we will speak by the way.” “I was coming yesterday to have a little open converse with your family, and to endeavour to settle something.”

Esther was silent. She felt, as the period drew nigh, a timid sort of dread, as though she were afraid of change; and Michael looked on her with an eye of inquiry, as though he feared something; when she re-assured him by the following observation: “I have been so happy hitherto, under the guidance of my mother and aunt, that I feel almost afraid of change.” Michael interrupted her.” “I hope, Esther, you do not repent.” She assured him that she did not; but she said, “when she thought of the duties before her, she doubted if she was sufficient to perform them with propriety.” “Oh, my dear Esther, sufficiency is of him you know; and this we must not only say, but feel. I think you have evening worship at your house?” — “Surely; always.”—“Then, I will step

down again in the evening ; I shall be sure to find your uncle then.” “ Very well ;” and her heart beat ; for she knew not what he was going to say. She was in mental prayer that all might go well, as they drew near the cottage she was going to. “ We must part here ; for I am going to assist poor Betty Richardson, to dress her child’s burn ; for it is such a job Michael.” So he bade her farewell till evening, thanked God in his heart for the providence which had brought them together, and walked back to the Brow, where he found Esther’s uncle sitting in deep conversation with Betty.

The consciousness of Betty’s look, and the archness of Mr Brownrigg’s, convinced Michael that their converse had been of him ; and, though there was very little curiosity in Michael’s character, he looked as though he would say what ? and when Betty passed from the room, it was with a sly curtsy, and a look of promise, to know all when the odd old gentleman was gone ; but the odd old gentleman was in no hurry to go ; and he began, while he kept making a very fine point to his pencil. “ How came you, Sir ; how came you, I say, to choose poor Esther, my poor niece, Sir, where there are so many fine young ladies ?” Michael said, “ I hope, Sir, my ser-

vant has not been so foolish as to talk of our neighbours, and to talk folly about them.' "Why, folly; I believe some people's folly, is other people's wisdom. Ha, his it not so, Michael?" "I really cannot understand you, Sir." "Well, no matter; only if I choose to put on my hat, smartly, and with my cane under my arm, to come to see Betty, has any one a right to say nay?"

Michael's understanding was a plain one; he was never fond of jesting; independent of the Divine prohibition. The truth was he had no play of fancy, or imagination, to lead him astray. It might be said of him, "he was a plain man;" so he gave Mr Brownrigg a smile for his jest, and opened his desk, to make some memorandum. Brownrigg, with both hands on the head of his stick, and his hat on his knee with his gloves in it, sat amusing himself with his own thoughts, when hand in hand, walked in at the Brow porch, Michael and his little sister. "Stephen sent the boy, uncle," and tucked into his little vest, he produced a letter. "Very odd," thought his uncle, to send these children; and he took the letter. It was, indeed, a letter from P——; but that Fanny should send them, when she had so often said to Michael, "not to the Brow my love; not

to uncle Michael's." "Betty, take these children home, and tell their mother how they came here."

Michael, who saw his uncle was displeased with him, sidled up to Brownrigg, and began to hang about his chair, as though he wished to secure a friend. Brownrigg, though a bachelor, and a confirmed one, had so much native kindness of heart, that children were sure of his friendship; and the lingering boy found a kind and ready listener to his tale; which though true, had a mixture like most doubtful tales. It was true Fanny had said, "send the boy with this letter;" and the young straggler, afraid to ask, waited the moment his mother left the room, took the letter; and, as little Fanny ran after him, he would not turn back, lest he should be prevented. Brownrigg was pleased with the manly child, and, giving him a bit of paper with a pencil began to amuse him; and, as Betty Smith took up the little girl, and said, "Come Sir," to the boy, his pleading eye was turned on Brownrigg, who said, "tell Mrs. Meredith I will take care of her son." This was not quite his uncle's wish, because he was aware that there had been some artifice; however, as he saw Brownrigg was interested in the child, he permitted Betty Smith to depart with the

girl, after stroking her golden locks, and imprinting a kiss on her little blue-veined forehead. "There, Sir," said little Michael, and began to shew his paper to Brownrigg. But he did not dare to look at his uncle; he knew that he was not pleased, and his uncle spoke not. But the child was very warm-hearted, he could not rest easy; and in the softest tone of infantine endearment, he said, "uncle, uncle Michael." Still, Michael went on writing, and Brownrigg looked up, wondering he did not answer the child. The little one making scrawl after scrawl, endeavouring to bear it manfully; and Brownrigg, with a tenderness unusual to him, tried to make up for the coldness of his uncle, and was unable to comprehend why he should carry it so severely with him.

In a few minutes, as his uncle closed his desk, the infant, unable longer to bear the deprivation of caresses so dear to him, burst into tears, ran across the old kitchen and sobbing most painfully, clung round the neck of his beloved relation.

Brownrigg's mind was working strongly during this scene; he could not understand it, and kept saying to himself, "I hope this man will make my Esther a good husband: he's mortal strict; what has the

poor child done ;” and he only waited the absence of the truant boy, to argue the point.

In a short time, Betty Smith returned, and Fanny with her. “My dear brother, so this boy will run away, after all I have said ;” and such was the force of early impressions, that the child made no attempt to defend himself ; and when he saw his mother, only stretched out his arms, and hid his head in her bosom.

Hardly could Brownrigg restrain himself while the child was present ; and, as soon as the mother departed, he exclaimed, “Now, what harm has that pretty boy done ? He has brought you a letter which you wanted to see ; he has come safely.” “Oh, Sir, but that was the doubt, whether he would arrive safely ; and beside, the artifice.” “Why, really, I cannot see much in it ; you may draw the string so tight, that he may break bound ; he may find the bonds too heavy, I say, and give you the slip one of these days.” “I hope not, Sir ; that child is very dear to me.” “No doubt, no doubt ; your own blood ; but don’t weary him, I say ; don’t weary him.” (*M.*) “When we consider the importance of truth, and remember that God requires it in the inward parts, we cannot guard infancy too

strongly.” “Why, no, no: but, what has the child done? I can’t see it.” “He endeavoured completely to deceive us; and, if I had not treated him distantly, and made him feel that he could not impose upon me, the success of this little stratagem might have proved fatal to his integrity.” “Well, well; you may be right; but I should fear that such severe restraint would make him hate the arm that curbed him.” “I trust not, Sir.” It did not appear so. I think you saw how fondly he clung to me. I believe the old fable is strictly true, Sir. You remember the boy biting off the ear of his mother, who had foolishly indulged him. I believe it will be generally found, they will esteem those most, and love those longest, who have imposed wholesome restraint upon them.” “May be so. I am an old bachelor; and, as I mean to live in a plain, and not on a hill, I shall desire Mrs. Meredith to let this boy come and see me sometimes.” “You must not spoil him.” “No, no; never fear, we shall make it out very well together;” and, from this time, there was an increasing friendship between the worthy old bachelor, and the infant Michael.

After Brownrigg had departed, Michael carefully revolved in his mind what were

his plans for the evening. He well knew how scanty were the means of Esther's aunt and mother ; he knew that in taking Esther, he deprived them of a part of their maintenance, and he had committed the subject to God in prayer ; and the last conviction on his mind was, that he ought to provide at least for the mother of his wife. Yet, how to do it without offending their feelings, he knew not. At last it occurred to him, that there was one way in which he might safely evince his care, without wounding that delicacy which he was delighted to perceive in every branch of the family ; but we will leave this till the whole family are assembled.

That fine purple shade, which so often characterises our evenings in England, had nearly spread itself over the horizon, save where the last rich crimson hue of the departing sun, blended with the orange on the western side of the village, while the southern was distinguished by the palest tinge of emerald so chaste, so transparent, that no pencil hath yet dared to imitate the unearthly glow. In this state was the sky, when Michael descended from his abode ; and, crossing the church-yard path, made his way to the cottage of Margaret Beal.

“ I am about to enter on my scene ;

there lies, one, whose goodness to me enables me to do what my heart desires to do." This he said, as his eye glanced over the tomb that he had raised to the memory of his master. "How long, or how short my career may be, rests with him, in whose hands are 'the issues of life and death.' What a change must that be, through which he hath passed. How wonderful those scenes, which it hath not entered the heart of man to conceive! Here fear, the fear of death damps every enjoyment; there, all certain, fixed, abiding, comprehending every thing clearly, which we 'now see through a glass darkly;' all love absorbed in the love of Jesus, the author of our bliss! If here, I feel the increasing weight of sin; there, I shall know from what I have been delivered."

In the midst of these deep reflections, as he leant upon the church-yard gate, a tall young man touched his hat to him. "How do you do, Sir; Mr. Kemp, I believe?" "Yes, Sir; I beg your pardon, I do not recollect you." "My name is, James Finch; I believe I have grown since you saw me." "Indeed you are, James; but I am grieved I should not have remembered you; but you are altered in countenance, as well as height." "I was coming to pass a little time with you

if it were convenient ; but you were going out, Sir." "I was ; but I will step back with you to the Brow, and order you some refreshment ; which you can take, while I settle the business I am going on."

The affair thus arranged, Michael returned with a quicker step to the cottage of Margaret Beal. Esther had been listening, for the last quarter of an hour, to the clanking noise of their little gate, and had been deceived more than once ; and was as much vexed, as it was in the power of a spirit so gentle to be vexed, at her repeated disappointment ; and, as Michael entered the room, Margaret, with more drollery than she often indulged, in her look and manner, said, "So you are come at last." "At last !" said Michael, involuntarily. "Yes," replied Margaret, "poor Esther has got up and down for the last half hour, and looked pale pink at every body." "Dear me, aunt," said Esther. "Well, child, now you look full rose colour." "What harm?" "Surely none," said Michael, kindly taking her hand. "Oh dear, no ; but my aunt is so very odd."

This had hardly passed, when Mr. Brownrigg entered. "Have you been waiting for me ? Did you expect me ?" said he, in a hurried voice. "No, no,

said Margaret, "You are in very good time; Mr. Kemp is but just come." "And I am sorry that I must hasten away," replied he; "for young Finch arrived, just as I left home, and this will oblige me to be rather precipitate on the subject I was about to introduce."

Perhaps it was better for Michael that his time was short; it obliged him to be explicit. He took Esther's hand. "As I have the full consent of all your friends, my dear Esther," and he paused a moment; "And as I trust the blessing of God is upon us, I am looking forward to the completion of my hopes with safe confidence; and it is my prayer, that every one here may be satisfied with the approval they have given me, that no regret may succeed." Here Brownrigg fidgetted; and he thought to himself, "Nonsense; what's all this about?" Michael saw that he was impatient, and it increased his embarrassment. "As in every thing that relates to business, it is best to be clear," said Michael, "I have thought it right to request this little meeting." "Yes, yes;" thought Brownrigg, "These methodists have a clear eye to their own interest; but I will not help him; he shall stammer it all out;" and he sat with a malicious composure. "I am quite aware my dear Mrs.

Beal, that in taking Esther away from you and her mother, I not only deprive you of a great domestic blessing, but of a part of your income. Now, as I am quite able to provide for a wife and family, and have no need of any addition, I beg that the interest of Esther's portion may be applied to your use, my dear madam," turning to Mrs. Humphries, "and that of her kind aunt; and for this reason, it had better be lodged in trust for you, during your joint lives, to descend to Esther, whenever it may please God to call you home. But, in all this I have consulted her, and you will not doubt that this plan fully meets her approbation." Esther's character was of the quiet kind; she could only answer by her tears, and "Oh, yes," whispered in the faintest accent.

Brownrigg was astonished; he was expecting a good sharp look out, and could scarcely believe Michael sincere, till he saw him prepare to leave the cottage; only adding, "I meant to have joined your family worship; but, as James Finch is come, I must hurry home. But Brownrigg was determined to have a word before he went; so he turned to him. "Well, Sir, you are in earnest; you will have nothing to do with Esther's money; you are a proud man I see."

All this was said playfully; but Michael was unused to jesting, and hardly understood it; so he waited in silence. Brownrigg gave him his hand. "Well, I believe you are an honest lad." "I hope so," was Michael's mild reply. But it was hardly possible for two persons to meet, less suited in mind and manner, than Brownrigg and his intended nephew. The one could not live without his jest; the other held it inconvenient, upon scripture principles. Esther, the modest Esther, seemed midway between them. She understood, and valued them both. Beneath this playful exterior, Brownrigg concealed a fund of benevolence; while Michael's gravity was remote from austerity, his every day habits and manners being full of cheerfulness, if not gaiety.

No sooner was the outer gate closed, and the cottage family alone, than Brownrigg exclaimed, "A very extraordinary lad, that! very extraordinary!" And Esther modestly added, "He is, indeed, uncle." But she had no sooner spoken, than she was frightened at her own boldness, and would have recalled the word; "Yet," thought she, "why should I?" So she remained silent. "He is an extraordinary young man," said Margaret Beal; "I remember him, when he first came to this

village." Here she related Michael's history, from his first entrance among them. When she came to that part, where he allowed Mrs. Finch £100 a year, he burst out in his own rapid way. "Nonsense, nonsense; foolish fellow; that will never do. No, no; he will come to poverty. I say he can't afford it; 'tis impossible." "But, my dear brother, he has afforded it; he has done it regularly." "Well, well, child, he may have afforded it: but, if he is to marry Esther, I suppose she is to be maintained. I say the man is a blockhead. Surely, Mrs. Finch should not take this money." "Oh," said Esther, putting her hand in her pocket, "Mr. Kemp gave me a paper;" and she began to examine it. By her increasing colour, her aunt and mother feared something unpleasant: "Esther, child, any thing wrong?" "Oh dear, no, mother;" and she passed it directly to her uncle. "Will you read it Sir?"

Brownrigg put his hand into his pocket, took out his spectacles, rubbed them with his glove; and pulling his collar, as though he would secure free articulation, began, "Dear Sir. You have always had the goodness to promise, that whenever I wished for experience for my boy, you would receive him for a few months beneath

your roof, where I shall rest assured of his safety, and with a kind and disinterested friend; and now, Mr. Kemp, as I hear you are about to marry, I can no longer think it just to take that yearly allowance you have so nobly paid me." And here the four cottagers exclaimed together, not in the same words. Esther said, "Wonderful?" Her aunt Beal, "He that watereth, shall be watered again." Her mother, "dear me, Esther, child!" Her uncle, "quite right; very good, very good! If these methodists go on so, I shall turn methodist myself." "Mrs. Finch is not a methodist, uncle." "Well, well, child, so much the better. Well after all, this is an extraordinary business. Just as this hot headed boy gives away £50, a year, this warm hearted lady sends a hundred."

It was, indeed, providential, that a provision was making for all parties; and that without solicitation from those parties who needed it. This is no unusual case: and it is well said, that "those who watch providence, will never want a providence to watch." The every day circumstances of life warrant the conclusion, "the Lord will provide."

James Finch's visit to the Brow, though it could not be dispensed with, did not seem exactly timed; and Michael at first

thought he should remove him to the Mill for a season, as he wished to paint the house, and make a few repairs, before he brought Esther home; but, as Michael was never hasty, he waited to observe the character of James, before he took any step. He found him retiring, and modest; and, when encouraged, remarkably open and pleasing; but, what was most necessary in the present case, he found him completely to be trusted. In order to prepare him for home usefulness, he was continually confiding some business of trust, and always found him completely worthy of his confidence; so that, in three weeks after his arrival, he felt convinced he could leave home with perfect safety. "And here again," said Michael, "the Lord provides; for I should like to see my dear parents for a short time; and I could not have left home, unless some one had been here on whom I could rely."

There was one feature in the character of James, which, although it frequently made Michael smile, nevertheless pleased him; it was his veneration for the character of his sister: it amounted almost to idolatry. Whatever was faithful in the christian, amiable in the ministerial character, lovely in the female, James Finch was sure to rub his hands, and look with a

sort of glee, concluding, "Ah, that's just like my sister Jemima;" and Michael, who, as we have before said, had no taste for jests, could not help one day asking, "What, does Miss Jemima help Mr. Cooper?" "No, no," said James, smiling, "But I always take a walk with her after church, and we take our bibles, and read over the text; and sometimes, when she thinks Mr. Cooper did not go far enough, she says; 'now, you see, James, Bishop Beveridge, and Dr. Horne, and Archbishop Leighton, saw this in a different light;' and she makes it as clear to me! Oh, Mr. Kemp, I wish you knew her." "My dear James, I do know her, and respect her most highly." (*James.*) "Is it not very extraordinary, Sir, that my sister should understand so much better than my mother?" (*M.*) "Why, my dear fellow, it is the Lord who enlighteneth the understanding, in his own good time. Your dear mother always gave me some notion of what Cornelius was: and I have no doubt that her alms and her prayers are gone up for a memorial, before God, and that she will soon see everything clearly."

James's eyes glistened, for he loved his mother most dearly; and, indeed, she merited his regard. It might be said of her, "she did what she could." It was

the mist of pharisaical prejudice which prevented her doing more ; she was faithful to the light she had ; and it was never known that a person was in this state, without farther manifestation from above.

Brownrigg was so pleased with all the arrangements, and with the character of his intended nephew, that he was ready to second him in his wishes to bring matters to a close ; and as he had now began his cottage, and was every day busy in his garden, he seemed to wish others as busy as himself, and was continually urging Esther to begin to get ready, while the modest little girl was trembling, lest her dear uncle should express this haste before Michael ; but, she had no reason to fear. Brownrigg was a very correct man, and had an acute sense of propriety ; and one evening, shortly after, Michael called, saying, “ Esther, I think we are sufficiently known to each other, to judge whether the happiness of our future lives might be increased or diminished by our union. I should not wish to hasten you ; but, as this is a period in which we may leave home as conveniently as any in the year, I was thinking early in the next week ;”—and he paused for Esther’s reply.

The timid girl looked upon him, and a thousand thoughts seemed to rush through

her mind; and the idea of the step she was about to take seemed so momentous, as to make her shudder; and her expression was so doubtful, as to alarm Michael. "I hope, Esther, you do not repent?" This question, put with much feeling, recalled her to the consideration of the pain she was giving, and she exclaimed, "Oh, no indeed." "Well, then, we will say Tuesday next;" and it remained fixed. And now, so strong was the impression of the momentary pang she had inflicted upon a heart so kind and generous, that from that time, Michael had no cause to doubt her regard for him.

On the following morning, as James Finch stood brushing his coat in the hall at the Brow, "I was thinking, my young friend," said Michael, "I was thinking to dispatch you homewards." James's colour had been heightened by the exercise of brushing, and was now flushed to crimson, by the words, "dispatch you home;" but Michael's extended hand soon reassured him; and he continued, "to your family I owe so much, James, and so many blessings have been conveyed to me through their means, that I should be indeed ungrateful, if I did not continue to associate them with the happiest events of my life. I am about to change my state, and

I have every reason to believe most happily; and it is my earnest wish to secure for my future partner the friendship of your dear sister. Do you think it would be possible for her, and agreeable to her, to be present at my nuptials?" "Delightful!" said James, and he skipped involuntarily. "When shall I go, Sir?" "As soon as you can conveniently get ready." And the animated boy replied, "I am ready as soon as my horse is saddled."

So the affair was arranged; and, ere the evening of the following day, Jemima was making her little preparations to join them. Mrs. Finch, in her own calm, placid manner, leaning on the shoulder of her darling son, said, "James, I have such a regard for Mr. Kemp, and with very good reason, that I really do not like to be left behind; and, as our little tax-cart is very light, you can continue with the horse you brought, and Jemima and I may accompany you together. Do you think it would be inconvenient?" "Dear, no, mother; I am sure Mr. Kemp would be very much pleased to see you."

We will not weary the reader by the description of the journey; but merely say, how agreeable was the meeting on both sides; the cordial welcome to Mrs. Finch, and the grateful surprise to Michael.

It was Friday evening when the travellers arrived. Jemima withdrew to the little room she had been accustomed to occupy in her uncle's time, to make herself a little comfortable, before she went to the Mill, to see Fanny; and Betty Smith came curtsying, to know, whether Mrs. Finch would please to occupy the large green bed, or would like better to go into the porch bed room, which was just new furnished with white dimity. "I think," said Jemima, "my mother would not like the green bed quite so well; my poor dear uncle died there."

There was something in Betty's look, which seemed to convey an idea to Jemima's mind, that she thought this weak, and, without any expression in words from Betty, Jemima observed, "we're not all constituted alike, Mrs. Smith; some minds are stronger than others." "Ah, ma'am," said Betty, "far be it from me to blame any body; I was thinking of something clean contrary to that. My father was once very well to do in the world, but he was ruined by being too good natured; he was bound for a neighbour, and they broke, and that ruined my poor father."

Jemima was looking, and wondering what this had to do with her mother and the green bed; but Betty cleared herself

by adding, "That very bed, Miss, my father bought quite new, at old Mr. Harvey's, the quaker; and when my poor father's goods were sold, your uncle, Miss, bought it. I never like to make it, and you don't like to sleep in it; no more does master. I believe he thinks it too good; so the poor old bed is kept to look at. But we have proud hearts ma'am; I am afraid I told you this story, that you might know I had seen better days." "Oh, my good Betty, I trust our best days are to come." "Yes, Madam, I do hope so too; and I believe it, and can almost say I know it. Oh, I have passed such a time here, with that good young man, my master; not a day but something is to be learned from him." "Pray, Betty, do you know any thing of the young person he intends marrying." "Yes, Madam, I know her very well, indeed: and, if my master had travelled England through, I do not think he could have met with a young person more deserving." "I am delighted to hear you say so, Betty; we are all very fond of Mr. Kemp, I assure you." "I am very glad of it, Ma'am; for I can say, that I love my master as if he were my son."

Mrs. Finch began to wonder at the long stay of Jemima, and sat with the tea-things before her, till she was weary; and Betty

began to feel it. She said, "perhaps, Ma'am, you do not know I had taken in the tea;" and she was swiftly with them in the parlour.

It was one feature in this excellent girl, that she studied every point in her mother's character, and moulded herself to her will, wherever that mould was safe; and as a pattern of order, and excellent management, none could surpass Mrs. Finch.

There is an awkwardness in the meeting of persons upon an important event, in which all feel interested, and upon which none care to speak; and perhaps this ice is not so easily broken by any, as one of Michael's character.

Shortly after they were seated, the following conversation took place. "From the kind interest you take in me, Madam, I cannot but suppose I have hitherto acted agreeably to your wishes; and, indeed, your generosity in relinquishing what I thought it my duty to pay you, convinces me that you do not disapprove any part of my conduct. I have been as prudent as I could, and I owe no man any thing; but I have added nothing to the stores my master left me, in the way of household goods. Betty is very prudent, and has never asked for an addition; but I should like to have every thing comforta-

ble and orderly for Esther, before she comes; would you, Madam, give us some notion of what is proper? My dear sister is so much engaged, and has so little experience in this way, that you will do me a great service, if you will point out what is necessary."

We should not trouble the reader with this, but to shew Betty's faithfulness; there was not a hole in the most common piece of linen. "How have you managed for towelling Betty?" said Mrs. Finch. "Why, Ma'am," said Betty, laughing, "a piece of sponge will save many a yard of linen, and a clean scrubbed dresser serves our men for a table-cloth; and the minute savings of Betty Smith, evinced that she was under the eye of Him who seeth the heart.

Mrs. Finch walked round with this respectable woman and saw the hand of thrifting frugality every where. Let no one say that religion is cant. Hypocrites may put on religion for a cloak; hypocrites may use the language of religious people; but, to those who know the influence of principle upon practice, a truly religious servant will be found an invaluable blessing. "When I first came here, Madam, I found the best bed in the garret, and master's napkins, you know his best half dozen that

you left behind for his use, they were used for I don't know what; but the scaldings I had to get out the spots, the boilings in milk, and the spreading on the grass-plat, till I could get them in order; and beautiful napkins they are. Master, poor man, did not know what was going on; but there is one thing we really do want, Ma'am, if you please, common sheets." every thing was seen to, and Betty's hand was seen miraculously preserving the property of her master.

Mrs. Finch was extremely pleased; and, when she descended to the little parlour, to relate what was needful, and to describe Betty's good management, Michael replied, "It is just what I expected, Madam, though I am no judge. Such an industrious creature; never a moment idle."

Michael was about to quit the room, but he turned back. "What sum, Ma'am, do you think might be sufficient to make all right. I had put by £20 for this purpose. Would it be enough?" "Oh, more than enough," said Mrs. Finch. "Well, madam, will you employ whatever is over in any thing necessary for Betty; but do not give it her, for she will not lay it out;" and now, the difficulty was, to get Betty to say what would be useful to

her. She had no wants; she had not, indeed, she had enough, and abounded. "Dear me, madam, don't think about me; I am a plain body; if I have only my clean cap and apron, you know, ma'am, I am dressed."

At length, with some difficulty, she was prevailed upon to own, that a little linen would be useful; and, if the reader can fancy Betty's gratitude and surprize, at the gift of a new bonnet and cloak for the wedding, they will not go beyond the occasion, if they conceive, that her heart was lifted in prayer to God, grateful prayer and praise.

Tuesday came, and the sun streamed through the lattice of Esther's window, and illuminated the articles in her little room. But she did not wait for his rising; she had long risen from her rustic couch; she had turned over the Scriptures for some suitable portion, and she had repeated her favourite hymn, "Oh, for a closer walk with God," ere his first beams tipped the distant hill.

The fine carol of a favourite blackbird was pouring his liquid note on the morning air; she had opened the window, and was walking up and down her little apartment when her mother entered. "Esther child, are you well?" "Quite well, dear mother;

but do leave me." "Hetty, if you can truly say you are quite well, I will leave you; but child, I have heard you walking up and down for some time." "Mother, I am not ashamed to tell you, that I have been composing my mind, by inquiring as to the Lord's will concerning me, by searching the Scriptures, to know what will best suit the station upon which I am entering, by devoting myself anew to Him, who hath cared for me all my life." "Quite right, my Hetty;" and she kissed her cheek, and left her.

"What changes have taken place; what worldly prosperity! Ah, 'tis easier to bear adversity. Did not Agar say, 'give me neither poverty nor riches, lest I be poor, and steal; lest I be rich, and say, who is the Lord.' Hitherto, God hath kept me; I have known no want, and now, here is my kind, providing uncle, and a friend who has selected me in preference to many more deserving, I have no doubt. May I be kept; may I ever remember that I have been raised from comparative poverty, to a state of ease and security; may the few anxieties I have experienced, in providing for myself and my dear parent, keep me thoughtful, and pitiful towards others."

Thus prayed this christian girl; and,

after neatly dressing herself, she sat down to put the lace to her aunt's and her mother's cap. She had adhered to the pattern they usually wore; but she had trimmed them with the finest lace that her modest purse could afford; and, she had nearly completed her job, and was snipping the white ribands which were to go plain round their heads, when William from the Brow came clattering at the gate, asking to speak with Esther, with a large parcel on his head. "I would ha' come last night, Ma'am; indeed I did come, but you were all shut up, and I was afraid of coming too soon this morning; because, says I to myself, my mistress that is to be, will have plenty to think on to-morrow. Well, Ma'am, the good old squire, your uncle, he's been in a sad taking. These things that I have got here, why I have been after them to the coach, bless my heart, aye, ten-times, I am sure, within the last fortnight; and, dear me, how angry he have been with some body he calls Peggy. Says he, last night, says he, 'why that girl deserves to go into the tread-mill; and Madam Tucker, too, did not I charge her;' but, Ma'am, it is no good telling you all he said; he was very angry, I assure you. And now, Madam, he desired me to tell you, that you are to be sure to put on

what is in that box ; and you, Ma'am," said he, bowing to Margaret and Mary. "Oh, dear me," said Margaret, "what shall we do?" But Mary looked at her sister, as much as to say, don't speak before the man. "Give my duty to my uncle," said Esther, and she put her hand into her pocket to remunerate William for his trouble. "No, Ma'am," said William, "I cannot take that ; it is a pleasure for me to wait on you ; and I hope I shall wait on you many a year yet. But dear me, I must go home : for master don't know I'm out, and he will be wanting me." "Come, Esther, child, you must have your breakfast."

Esther constrained herself to eat, and she began to unpack the box ; and, as she spread the articles upon the large oak table, she kept saying to herself, "how very kind, and so well chosen, mother." There was for each of his sisters a plain grey Irish stuff ; for Esther, a nice India muslin gown, a silk spencer, a white chip bonnet lined with sarsnet, and tied with a sarsnet riband, several pairs of gloves ; and, what was very remarkable, and showed the drollery of Brownrigg, there was a shoe of Esther's, which he had stolen for a pattern, and two or three pair with it of new ones, very nicely made, and half a

dozen pair of stockings. Nothing seemed forgotten.

Esther had missed this shoe for a long time, and had laid the loss upon a puppy that sometimes came into the cottage; and she now remembered that her uncle had said, "he had no doubt some puppy had taken it."

They were all obliged to go and change their dress; for they knew it would be a great offence, if they did not. The aunt and mother's gowns were rather small; for Betty Smith had been the guide, and she was considerably smaller than either; but they managed very well, and were completely dressed in the gifts of their kind relative, ere they heard his whistle, "Let the merry bells ring round;" an air of which he was particularly fond, and which, on this day, seemed remarkably well suited.

As soon as he entered, he drew Esther to the window, he seated himself in it, drew her down upon his knee; and, putting his hat beside him, gave her a kiss, and told her to cheer up; asked if her shoes fitted, and whether he had not said right, that some puppy had taken it; and, drawing from his pocket a purse, with twenty sovereigns, he said, "There, child, is pin-money for you." "My dear uncle what

can I do to show you my gratitude?" "Do, child; why, hold up your head, and look a little cheerful. All the way I came, the birds were singing, and we are all as brisk at the Brow Farm, and looking as fresh. There is a fine large party there. There is the old Patriarch, old Kemp, and his dove; there is the handsome Mr. Stephen, and his tripping fair one; and I have dressed his son out in a French-grey jacket, and nankeen pantaloons, with a new black beaver cap, and I have had a sad battle with his primitive uncle, about a handsome black feather, which it was my fancy to stick in the front of it. His mother was on my side, I could see; for she said "only to day, Michael; let him wear it to day." But he thought it was better to return it to the people, as it was only putting foolish notions in the boy's head; so I left them to settle it. Then, there is the tall stripling, Mr. Finch, and his fair sister, and his correct mother; by the way, she is a very fine woman, that Mrs. Finch; and Betty Smith, my favourite Betty, she has got on a quite new snuff-coloured gown, to match my coat. Poor creature, they have been laughing at her all the morning." "They, uncle, who?" "Why, James Finch and I my dear." "Aye, I thought." "Yes,

yes ; you thought your sober swain could not laugh, when you were not there. Well, you are a good girl. Let me see ; turn round. I hope you were not dressed when your clothes came." They all smiled. "Well, madam Beal, did I fit you." "A very little too small, brother." "Well, if there is enough to let out, that is no matter." "Plenty, my dear brother ; you have been very kind to us." "Come, let us see, what's o'clock ; we are to meet at the back of the spinning-school. I am to escort my fair niece. Mr. Michael is to give his arm to Miss Jemima, the handsome Mr. Stephen is to come and fetch you two ladies, and Mr. Finch gives his arm to the pretty Fanny. When we meet, Madam Finch has engaged herself to me on the other side, and there is a young sister of Mr. Michael's, and a very silly looking young man, a brother as I understand. There is an arch, well looking young man, who straggled in just now, and he was invited to stay ; indeed, I think he intended it. The good old folks are to remain till Monday when they talk of meeting you at P——. Where the great folks the bride and bridegroom are going, I can't say I know."

Esther smiled, though her heart sunk at the thought of so public a wedding ; and

now they set forward, a round-about way, by the back of the village. "We are in very good time," said Brownrigg; "we will take it coolly. Exactly at nine, I promised;" and now, every amusing thing that could enter into the mind of the kind uncle, and divert Esther from too much thought, was communicated. "The weather was delightful; he thought the birds sang a more sprightly carol than usual; and how delightful was the smell of the new-mown hay. And, Esther, child, did you know that I had bought a horse and gig, and that I mean to lend it you; for I see your husband is a very good whip? And, besides, I think it will be handy to carry your mother and your aunt about." "Dear, kind brother," said Mary and Margaret, in one breath. "And here we are," said he; "here come the cavalcade."

Poor Esther was trembling at the sight of Mr. and Mrs. Kemp; and Michael came forward, putting her hand into that of his mother, whose eye beamed christian gentleness. "Ah," said Fanny Meredith, "this is our sweet Esther, whom we all love so dearly."

The few trees that surrounded the church-yard, were in their richest beauty. Under a Spanish chesnut, was a small seat,

Mr. Lascelles sat reading; and his two daughters leaning over his shoulder, seemed to join him. At the sight of the party, he rose; and, bowing with a dignified grace all his own, he stepped forward, without particularly noticing any one. They filled the four chancel-pews, while the clerk arranged; and, as soon as Mr. Lascelles had put on his surplice, and was within the rail, he motioned with his hand for them to come forward.

After the first address, inquiring whether any one objected, there was a slight rustle, that made every one start; and, to the no small annoyance of Esther and Michael, the whole family of the Jennings's, who had crouched down in a distant pew, now started up, and came forward. They were dressed in all the finery they could collect. This was a sad thing for poor Joe; and it was very doubtful to his brother, if this unexpected meeting would not again unsettle him. However, this was no moment for conjecture; the whole thought was concentrated, and the heart devoted to the sacred subject in which they were engaged.

Mr. Brownrigg knew nothing of these people; but he stood half upright, by the side of his darling niece, and gave her hand to Michael, with an air equally impressive and imposing, as though he would have

said, "there, Sir, I make you a very handsome present;" and poor Esther was hot and cold, and could scarcely articulate, when she first began. She soon recovered, and said, most solemnly, "I, Esther, take thee, Michael," with a musical and liquid note, and with the reverence and solemn awe, due to him in whose presence she pledged herself, "For better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love cherish and to obey till death us do part." Michael spoke with his deep and manly voice, calmly, and slowly, as though he was pleased thus to devote himself to his gentle partner; and, as soon as the service was over, bowing respectfully to Mr. Lascelles, he slipped the hand of the newly betrothed beneath his arm, passed the Jennings's without a single glance, and was far on his way to the Brow, ere the party joined him.

No sooner did Brownrigg overtake him, than he said, "You Sir, what do you mean by running off with my niece?" Michael turned round, smiling, when Brownrigg continued, "but, Sir, you are not married yet." "Not married?" "No; you must come back and sign your names." "Are those ladies gone yet, Mr. Brownrigg?" "They are not in the church, but, they are all gathered round Mr. Joseph under the

Spanish chesnut, and seem *amazingly* glad to see him." "Well, we must leave it," said Michael. "Leave it," said Brownrigg, "I tell you, you must not leave it; you must come and finish it. You see, Esther, he wanted a hole to creep out at." "No, indeed," said Michael, smiling. "But I will explain this to you another time;" and they turned round.

If ever Michael felt awkwardly, this was the moment. He could not explain to Mr. Lascelles, or any one, the cause of this haste; and, when he returned, there was a subdued smile on every countenance, and a triumphant archness on that of Brownrigg, as though he would say, "I have caught them."

Names were at length signed, and the parties returned in good order to the Brow. Joe was constrained to join them; and was offering his arm to Miss Jemima, but awkwardly bidding farewell to Miss Louisa, and promising to come again in the afternoon; Brownrigg slipped the lady's hand beneath his arm; and, looking back upon Joe, said, in a soft tone, "How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away," and left him in his own lack-a-daysical manner, to find his way to the Brow.

As soon as the general congratulations were offered, as they ascended the hill Michael turned to Mr. Brownrigg, saying; "I should like to consult you about something." Brownrigg nodded, "When you will." Betty Smith had slipped by, and was curtsying, with her eyes downcast, as her master passed; and, "The Lord, bless you Sir," in her most respectful tone; "and, Sir, it is all spread, it is all spread in the great parlour." What could be spread, Michael did not know; he supposed Mrs. Finch had given orders. But no, Mrs. Lascelles, whose tender health never permitted her personally to share in the benevolent offices of her husband, was nevertheless with him in spirit, and was continually planning some little kind office. She had sent the gardener and her own maid, with flowers and fruits, and little delicacies of every kind, with a neat dessert service; and, at the moment when Mr. Lascelles set out for the church, these willing domestics departed for the Brow. There was a gift for the bride and the bridegroom, a neatly bound pocket bible and prayer-book for each, with the kindest wishes in a blank leaf, and this text in Michael's, "For I know Him, that he will command his children and his household after him," &c.; and in

Esther's, "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

These kind attentions, so soothing to a grateful mind, were received in genial soil; and the inquiry, 'what can we do to show our gratitude to Mrs. Lascelles?' immediately followed. But there was nothing to be done. They could pray for her; but she wanted nothing; and they could only feel, that they were insolvent debtors. But James Brown showed that he was in the secret; for, taking up the finest collection of flowers, said "These are for Mrs. Kemp." Poor Esther was so new to the name, that she thought it was for her mother; and, when it was presented to her, her uncle was obliged to say, "There, Esther, child, why don't you take your offering?" and she received it gratefully.

It required some courage on the part of Michael, in such a mixed circle, to know how to solemnize that day, which he considered as the most important of his life. But he could not rest; it must be; and, after they had eaten their fruit, he rose, and casting his eyes down, he said, "It would be an offensive suspicion, were I to think for a moment, that what I am about to propose could be displeasing to any one here; our kind friend, Mr. Las-

celles, has given us his blessing in the temple, and he has condescended to promise me, my dear Esther, (and he looked kindly on her), that he will bless us in our family." There was a still murmur of approbation through the circle, and Brownrigg observed, "he is a very fine man, and a very gentlemanly man, and I dare say, will speak very much to the purpose." Neither Mary Humphries nor her sister ventured to look up.

It was about an hour after they had returned from the church, that a note from Mr. Lascelles was put into Michael's hand. "As the little circumstance in the morning seemed to put us off our guard, I forgot to inquire at what hour you would wish to see me; and, as I should grieve to derange any of your plans, send me word by the bearer, when I shall come." Michael stepped out to see who the bearer was. It was Robinson, Mr. Lascelles's personal servant; who, when Michael saw him, put out his hand very cordially, saying, "how glad he was of the opportunity to wish him health and happiness." "Will you be so good, Sir, as to say to Mr. Lascelles, that as soon as it suits his convenience, we shall be most happy to see him, as we shall begin our little journey when we have dined." "I was to step

back, to let my master know." So, looking kindly at the newly-married, Robinson departed; and, ere Michael reached the sitting-room again, Mr. Brownrigg came to him, and enquired when the consultation was to take place; "Now, if you please, Sir:" and he related the circumstances of Miss Jennings's attachment to Joe, and how the sight of those ladies had made him run so quickly from church, and his fears that Joe's smothered flame would burst out afresh; and the more so, as those kind young ladies seemed disposed to meet him more than half way. "Why, my good Sir, what can you do? if the young man will marry, he must marry. I don't know what *metal* he's made of; but, as for me, if you were to watch me, and try to prevent me in any step I had a mind to take, you would only strengthen my resolution, and push me to the very point from which you wished to drive me. You see, Mr. Kemp, (and I suppose you know something of the same spirit), we men are obstinate fellows. Pat us, and stroke us, and all goes well; but, when once you drive us, we turn round, and are very apt to do the thing you would prevent."

Michael suffered Mr. Brownrigg to run on to the end. He then said, "No, Sir;

I am far from wishing to thwart my dear brother in any thing that could add to his happiness; but, if you knew those young women, the manner in which they have been brought up, so entirely unsuited to a working lad, like Joe, I am sure you would agree with me, that it would be ruin to him to be married to such a young lady: but you do not know them, Sir.”

“Whew, whew,” said Mr. Brownrigg, whistling, “not know them; why, I know them as well as if I had lived with them a twelvemonth; they are so anxious to be married, that they leaped the bounds of decency this morning, and came to the last place they should have entered. Why, Sir, a delicate young lady would have run a mile, rather than come into your church this morning. I don’t know them! why, I know them perfectly. Why, Sir, they would have me, if I were to ask it. I should be afraid of their snares, and their pretty ways, but they don’t catch old birds with chaff. Jonathan Brownrigg, and the pretty little Miss Tiny.” Here Michael started in wonder, how Brownrigg should have hit upon the name, when he remembered that Betty was in converse with the old gentleman one morning. “Very foolish, very foolish,” said Michael to himself; “almost the only foolish thing I ever knew

Betty do." "Well, Sir, suppose you leave Mr. Joseph to me; he seems very well disposed to scrape acquaintance with me." "But how will you manage, Sir? You must not mention that I have had any conversation with you. The truth is, my poor brother is very weak, and must be governed; yet, like most weak people, he thinks himself quite competent to judge of every thing. Poor fellow; far be it from me to thwart him unkindly." "Well, Sir, all this we understand," said Brownrigg; "and, while you take your little journey, Mr. Joseph and I can go visiting." "What," said Michael, "would you let him go?" "Yes, certainly, I would; and I should like to go with him." "I hope, Sir, you will not let him do any thing dishonourable. We have good reason to believe, that old Mr. Jennings's affairs are in an uncomfortable state. He is burthened with a family brought up in affluence, with minds ill-prepared to meet adversity. But I know that God can do all things, and I must leave this with him." "Well, well, Sir, trust me;" and they returned to the parlour.

Jemima Finch, and Mrs. Kemp, and the young Mrs. Kemp, were in one group. The elder Kemp and Mrs. Finch were conversing together; Mary and Margaret,

Stephen and Fanny, formed another ; Mr. Brownrigg and Michael returned to the table. They all assembled to enquire when Mr. Lascelles was expected. Mrs. Finch, who then kindly acted as mistress of the Brow for that day, proposed a turn in the garden, that all might be cleared against Mr. Lascelles's arrival.

This good man did not keep them long after church. He had gone to the spinning-school, sent Robinson forward, and there waited the return of his messenger ; and his dear daughters accompanied him. These young ladies, of whom little mention has been made, entered with delight into all the plans of their father, and of their mother ; and, as worldly young women claim the period of adolescence for entering upon its pleasures, so these feeling, sprightly girls, to relieve mamma from cares, her delicate frame was hardly able to sustain, and to accompany papa in his visits of mercy to the cottagers. There was one danger ; they were almost idolized in this village ; and papa was often obliged to say, "Take care, my pretty ones ;" and, "except a man be born again ;" "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor ;" and many such texts did he quote, to keep his dear, untried travellers, from resting short of that dependance which is alone safe.

Esther at first felt the entrance of those young ladies a painful addition. She had never been in a room with them, except at the lecture, and she cing close to Michael's chair for protection. But, as soon as they were all seated, and the dear Pastor had opened the "Big Book," she felt she was in a higher presence, and her timidity subsided. He read the 84th Psalm : and, after opening the Bible, and, as was his custom, suffering the leaves to fall over one arm, while the other was, reverently elevated, he began, "In this christian circle, there is less need for exhortation to choose the good way, than for warning to continue therein; not to be weary in well doing; not, as though we had already attained, or were already perfect; but, as a good man said, 'no christian must put off his armour, till he puts on his shroud.' We have a wily enemy. He will persuade us that we *know* such things, as *these*; and, filling us with a self satisfied spirit, will tempt us to forget, that we bear about us a body of sin and of death. In this 84th Psalm, the royal poet bursts into an enraptured strain of praise. 'How amiable &c. &c.' We have not known the privation, perhaps, which led to this longing, this thirsting, for the courts of the Lord. It is to be feared, if I may judge from *my own heart*, that there have

been moments, and these not a few, in which we have not duly estimated the blessing of public worship. ‘ But we have a High Priest, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities ; we have an open fountain, for the cleansing of our sin ; we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous,’ This blessing can only be estimated by those who feel its need. But should *sickness* visit us ; should any breach be made upon this happy circle, (a sort of shiver ran through the assembly) ; should the shutters of our apartment be closed, and the light of the natural sun be excluded, and our post by the sick bed become the post of observation, darker every hour ; *then* shall we exclaim, ‘ my soul longeth, yea even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord.’

“ We must, like the sparrow, build our nests nigh to his altars ; for all meaner resting places must fail us in these hours of sorrow and suffering.” Mr. Brownrigg fidgetted and shifted his crossed leg. He thought to himself, “ a very sensible man, certainly ; but this is more like a funeral sermon, than a nuptial blessing.” Mr. Lascelles perceived not his displeasure, though his dear relatives *did*. “ But,” said the venerable minister rising in his feelings, as he glanced upon Michael and Esther “ we turn with pleasure to the nuptial benedic-

tion; because we feel sure that it is suitable, and well applied here. 'Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still be praising thee.' To dwell there, cannot surely mean, you will say, our taking up our abode in the Temple of the Lord. Assuredly not. But he who is found continually visiting those courts where God especially dispenses his blessing. We may say, that his blessing peculiarly rests on those who place their strength in him; who, conscious that no good dwelleth in them, but as that good is imparted, find their faith strengthened, and their hope brightened in every step of their pilgrimage. I know not that I *could* contemplate a scene which conveys to my mind more unmixed pleasure, than the present. I can hear those who can witness that the Lord is faithful; who can say with Jacob, 'with my staff I passed over this Jordan and now I am become two bands;'" here old Kemp looked up involuntarily; for, as was his custom, he was leaning on his stick, with his head bowed on his hands; and Joe, whose vacant stare seemed as though he comprehended nothing, appeared to wonder that Mr. Lascelles should speak about his father's stick. Michael was concentrated. Fanny, who was present to every thing, saw the wondering folly of poor Joe; and, closing her eyes, as

though she would shut out the disturbance it would cause her, gathered up her thoughts, resolving to look no more that way. “We trust that our strength is in him; and oh, that as we pass through this valley, we may be refreshed in every thirsty step by the water of life. May the blessing from above, descend as the rain. Oh, that the capacities for enjoyment may be filled by *no meaner water*; then shall we go from strength to strength, till each of us shall appear in Zion before our God!” Then, turning the exhortation into prayer, he clasped his hands, and looking upward, continued, “Oh, Lord God of Hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Observe, my beloved young friends, *who* was the shield of David. ‘Behold, O God,’ he says, (and the regard of the Lord was what he sought,) ‘*Look* upon the face of thine anointed.’ He prefers the meanest station in God’s House, to the most sumptuous abode of wickedness; and wherefore? ‘Because the Lord is a sun to *enlighten*; a shield to *defend*; he giveth *grace* here, *glory hereafter* and no good thing will he withhold from those that walk uprightly.’ Let us ever remember what I have before adverted to, that though we have long professed ourselves devoted to the cause of the gospel; and though

our hopes seem founded, and no doubt are founded, on that *Rock* smitten for us, 'not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow on,' &c. should be our language. It was well said, that the grace of yesterday will not do for to day; and so many instances of awful apostacy may be cited, as would make the stoutest tremble. No, let us be found humbly waiting at the doors of His house. We have had sweet, and continued proofs, where the head of this family has placed his trust; we have seen with unmixed delight, that he hath been working out his salvation with fear and trembling, knowing who worketh in him, both to will and to do; but to God be all the glory; for we may truly say, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou regardest him.' Yet this we will say, 'Weak in ourselves, yet strengthened by his power, we can do all things;' and 'I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.' We may sometimes judge by the temporal blessings the Lord bestows upon us, that his favour is with us; and, as an earthly good, what is so great as such an

help-meet, as may never throw a stumbling-block in the way of our best interests? And here is one to whose modest virtues I must bear testimony; one who will, I am sure, do him good, and not evil; who, tried in the fire of adversity, hath been contented to pursue her modest way, unnoticed and unknown. Unknown to fellow mortals, indeed, but well-known to Him, whose favour is life. Oh, my faithful little girl, may the days of thy prosperity find thee still trusting in Him, who hath led thee hitherto. Then may we safely say, 'That the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, will be with you, and the God of Jacob will be your refuge.'" And now, rising reverently, and spreading his hands, he said, "No good will he withhold from you, if you walk uprightly; for the Lord of Hosts will bless those that trust in Him. Now, may the God of your Father help you; may the Almighty bless you with the blessing of Heaven above, and of the earth beneath."

Esther had blushed and trembled, and the tears had flowed plentifully; and, "Let us pray," was a cheerful relief to this season of excitement. The prayer was brief, for the expounding had been long; and the usual blessing was then pronounced, "the Lord lift up the light of his life-giving countenance upon you, and give you peace." They

offered him a little of their raspberry wine, which he took smiling : and, as the bride brought it herself, he took that opportunity to say, " She must do Mrs. Lascelles the favour to call upon her." Esther looked up in astonishment at the word favour ; and the good man said, " do you not know that you are the queen of the day, and must remain so till another bride comes." And he looked archly smiling at Jemima, and said, " I think I have seen you here before ; but I must not steal sheep from my brother Cooper's flock."

This quiet girl stood the laugh very comfortably ; but it is remarkable that Joe, who could understand no other subject, was quite awake to this, and stood rubbing his long hands, and laughing, when every one else had done.

Now the Lascelles's withdrew, and dinner was announced, clean and plentiful ; and the kind-hearted, motherly Mrs. Finch, and Mrs. Kemp, took Esther between them, and thus saved her the fatigue and the blushing, which taking her own seat might have caused. " Come, come," said Mr. Brownrigg. " I intend to be master to day : so he made Michael sit down promiscuously with his guests, and there was no want of footmen ; for Ste-

phen and Jem were as brisk and as happy, though they had both had the modesty to apologize to Mrs Finch, for sitting in her presence. “ Good and respectable young men,” she replied, “ I desire these distinctions may be forgotten between us.” Michael avoided looking up, lest he should meet Jem’s eye. James was awake to it; he remembered the folly of his boyish days; he also kept his eye very busy on objects more remote from his mind.

When the meal was passed, Betty Smith and William were invited in, to drink health to the newly-married. It was drank on the part of Betty, with tears and with trembling; for she loved both her master and her new mistress. To Margaret and to Mary she owed her comfortable dwelling: and, for many years, the kind hand of Esther had done every little job in the way of dress to which Betty was incompetent. She was Betty Smith’s milliner and mantua-maker, and was only paid in thanks and in blessing; for Esther was so handy with her needle and her scissors, that she * “ gai’d auld claes look amaist like new.” How will the willing mind, and the active finger, dispense their benefits, while ignorance gapes and wonders, and closes with,

* Vide Cotter’s Saturday Night.

“ Well, for my part, I never did like work.” But, be it remembered, that this feminine employment is indispensable in certain ranks of life; pleasant and useful in all. Poets have immortalized the needle, and the painter’s pencil hath often given us the quiet form of woman, while the fingers are busily engaged, seeming rapt in calm speculation, or the aspirations of devotion. ’Tis woman’s purest employment; it courts no praise; it is the handmaid of charity, and executes that which the mind prompts; and many a useful work of the finger may be accomplished, even when sight begins to weaken, and taste for more elaborate performance fades. Pardon this long digression, my amiable young country-women; but to me few sights are more endearing, than the family group, seated at their little works, while the father or the brother of that family reads some judicious author. The harmony of taste, and agreement of sentiment, draw the band closer, and shut out many an unprofitable censure, and many an idle word.

“ And now,” said Brownrigg, “ good people, it’s three o’clock and past, and some folks intend to travel twenty miles, and some folks are going out to tea.” “ That’s me,” thought Joseph. “ Yes,

yes, I must go ; I promised Miss Louisa." No one heard him but Brownrigg, next to whom he was sitting ; and he was astonished, when the latter said to him, " I should like to go with you, Mr. Joseph." He could only wonder in himself, and could scarcely repress the expression of that wonder. " Why, sure," thought he, " Mr. Brownrigg won't go ;" and indeed he hoped he would not. But never did Brownrigg give up a project, especially if it amused him ; and this greatly amused him. He had planned what he should say ; how he should introduce himself, and had no doubt of being greatly entertained. And perhaps nothing could have happened better to divert poor Mary Humphries from the separation that was about to take place, than what she thought of this foolish business of her brother's visit to Sizors. What he could be thinking of ; what was the intention of his making such an acquaintance, they could neither of them conceive. He was neither going to explain, nor excuse : and, after poor Joseph's weak head had laboured some time with the enquiry, " what could Mr. Brownrigg mean?" he at last brought out, " Do you really mean to go, Sir?" and Brownrigg bowed very gravely. " Yes, Sir, I do. I hope you have no

objection?" "Me, Sir. No, Sir; but do you know Mr. Jennings?" "There is a beginning for all things, you know, Sir. I am going to settle in this country, Mr. Kemp, and it is pleasant to be acquainted with our neighbours." Joe could say no more; so, however unwillingly, he was constrained to accept Mr. Brownrigg's company; and, just as the clock struck four, they sallied out together. Old Kemp looked very uneasily at Joe; and Brownrigg, perceiving it, spoke in a sort of half whisper, "don't be uneasy, Sir, I shall not lose sight of this stripling."

Esther had changed her dress, and was in a neat nankeen pelisse, and cambric muslin bonnet, with her dove-coloured cloak upon her arm, waiting Michael's pleasure. Her thoughtful mother had packed all neatly in the chaise-box, and Betty Smith had provided for her master. There was nothing wanting; but lest Joe should give him the slip, Brownrigg had appointed him to hand in his new sister; and, as Joe thought it the post of honour, and never saw far beyond the present moment, he had not the slightest suspicion of Brownrigg's scheme.

Mary Humphries, though quite sensible of the blessing of such a son-in-law as Michael, had that morning parted with her

all, and her heart swelled with distress the more painful, that she was constrained to conceal it. “Ah!” thought she, “how I shall miss that dear creature; the first sight my eyes opened on every morning was her dear face, ‘mother, it is time for you to rise.’” Margaret Beal saw this; indeed, she dreaded the parting moment, and watched Mary with the kindness of a sister. She got her into the garden, and began to state what a blessing it was that Esther was so well provided for. “Oh yes, I know it, I know it; I am an ungrateful creature, ’tis all selfishness, Margaret, but I must weep—you must let me alone.” Betty Smith, whose eye was upon every one, guessed poor Mary’s sorrow, and followed them into the garden. “Ah!” said she, “I knew how it would be, but you know she will be back in a day or two, for master cannot stay long.” “I am quite ashamed, Betty, I really am; but if you knew what Esther has been to me——” Margaret Beal thought it best to leave her to herself; so they kept walking up and down, Mary weeping, till at last, feeling conscious that something was due to Mrs. Kemp and the rest of the party, she returned to the parlour, where they were all assembled. Stephen had been home to fetch his children from a neighbour’s, where they had been lodged

for safety ; and the little Jemima came as neat as cambric muslin could make her ; and the boy in his grey dress, and black hat and feather ; and poor Mary was glad of this relief, and began to caress the young ones, taking the little girl upon her knee. The sight of Esther's hem-stitch round the sleeve of the child's frock recalled all her pleasant activity and willing services : the child, looking in her face, exclaimed, " Oh ! Missey Hum, what for you cry ? Your tooth ache ? " Fanny had been very poorly lately with this complaint, and the young innocent was sympathising. The little Michael, who was a most manly spirited boy, full of imitation and kindness, riggled down from his grandmother's knee, and was off to the kitchen, where, pulling and tugging a small pocket handkerchief, which his mother had fastened firmly between his vest and trousers, he succeeded in breaking the loop ; and, heating it as hot as he could, crumpled it up in his little fat hands, and brought it to Mary. " The dear, kind child ! " said Mrs. Finch, " what a sensible boy it is ! " And Jemima caught his hand. " How came you to think of such a thing ? " said she. And Fanny explained it, by saying, he often warmed the handkerchief for her when she had the tooth-ache.

" Dear child, dear sensible child," said

this kind lady, "how very pleasing it is to see such infants so feeling." "Yes," said Fanny, and she passed her maternal arm round her boy, and with the other parted the hair on his open forehead, and imprinted a kiss. "He is a kind-hearted little poppet, and his mother loves him, how dearly who can tell." Mrs. Finch guessed; "That tall boy," said she, looking at James, and stretching out a hand to Michael, "was once a pet boy like you." "Oh," said the young one, "I am not mother's pet, I am mother's man;" and he drew up to make as much of himself as he could. "Little Jem is mother's pet." "Yes, I are," said the little one; and she nestled her head into her mother's lap, and kissing her arms, while the mother looked delight on each.

Where habit hath made one being necessary to another, time only can heal the breach. Thus it was with Mary and Margaret: they felt that they should return to their homes lonely and dull; but, when they considered how mercifully God had appeared for them, and that they were permitted still to comfort and solace each other, they resolved to resist what they were constrained to own was rebellion in a mild form. There were not wanting some to pity Betty Smith, but it was ma-

lignant pity—it was, “ Poor Betty, she had a fine time of it, plenty of good things she has fingered ; she has had the government in her own hands, she had rendered no account, they dared to say ; all the goose feathers, all the hen feathers, she has had plenty.” “ Plenty of what ? ” “ Oh, one thing or tother, I don’t know what, can’t justly say, but every thing, I suppose it will make a great change for she. They supposed Mrs. Kemp would keep her keys now.” “ Of course she will,” said one and another. This ill-natured pity had travelled round, and just before Mary and Margaret went home, the good creature opened her heart, said she was sure her hands were clean, and if they heard any thing, hoped they would clear her, and not give ear to any evil report. “ Why, do we not know you ? ” said Margaret, “ and have we not always known you ? ” said Mary. “ Yes, but who can tell what unjust suspicions might make master think.” “ Ah, Betty,” replied Margaret, “ I see you have not learnt your lesson perfect ; Arn’t you to pass through evil report and good report ? Is your mistress given to unjust judgment ? and has your master ever given ear to unjust reports ? ” “ Never.” “ Then why should you doubt them now ; and if, poor frail

creatures as they are, they should do wrong ; why have you not a God to go to ? What says St. Paul ? ‘ As deceivers, and yet true.’ This is Paul’s description of the Christian ; and if he thus suffered, who are we, Betty ?” Betty wiped a tear from her eye ; and when, after the fatigue of the wedding-day was over, she drew near the throne of mercy : she found her best consolation in spreading all before Him to whom all hearts are open. There she whispered her sorrows and her doubts, and her poor oppressed bosom became lighter as she breathed the incense of prayer and praise.

END OF PART I.

LONDON:
IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

MICHAEL,
THE MARRIED MAN;

OR,

THE SEQUEL TO

THE HISTORY OF

MICHAEL KEMP.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
“ SHADES OF CHARACTER,” “ HISTORY OF MICHAEL KEMP,”
&c. &c.

PART II.

LONDON:
JOHN HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY.
1827.

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LONDON:

JOHNSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

MICHAEL,

THE MARRIED MAN.

IF you wish for perfect happiness, seek it not among frail mortals ; for there is not an event however prosperous, but brings with it some painful consequences, to the circle among whom it occurs. Poor Mary Humphries and Margaret Beal, felt it, and the faithful and kind hearted Betty Smith was glad her master was made happy, although it had occasioned many disagreeable reflections on her. As for the Miss Jennings's it had crushed all their hopes. Michael's appeared an unmixed cup, and had it not been for her dear mother, Esther's would almost have been the same, but she was a noble creature, and had always felt more for others than for herself. She was in great fear lest Michael should

think she was unhappy, and she forebore to say, how much of her heart she had left behind her at the Brow; and when they had passed the known limits of Esther's recollection, and were entering on scenes of novel interest, as Michael painted this little view, and that pleasant prospect, Esther endeavoured to rise above that oppression which rested on her heart. But this good young man could account for it, and doubted not, but so duteous a daughter, would make a kind wife.

James Finch was pleased with the opportunity of making himself useful to Mr. Kemp, and his nice mother was delighted to see, that what was a season of gaiety to others, threw him into a state of restless activity; he seemed really to want to make business, and when he found little to do, was determined to signalize himself, and sending for some invisible green from the next town, began painting the little trellis work at the door, and the arbour in the garden. "Dear sir," said Betty Smith, "I am sure master would be sadly grieved to see you at such a job as this. Why, William, you know as master gave you particular orders to pay all respect to Mr. Finch." William scratched

his head, and declared it was no fault of his. Mrs. Finch said, it was no fault of any one's, for she loved to see her boy busy, and it was what he often did at home, and understood it very well. Betty Smith smiled in her good-natured way, and said, she thought the young gentleman went about it very handy. Fair warnings were given to all the inhabitants, not to paint themselves; and this good-natured young man was highly gratified, at the improvement of the Brow entrance. He would willingly have extended his labours, had not his mother and sister, voted against smell of paint, on the return of the bride and bridegroom. "Well, what can I do then?" "I tell you what you shall do; I have a present for Mr. Kemp, on his return, which I know will be acceptable to him, a folio Bible; and as you write a very good hand, James, you shall write, 'The gift of Martha Finch to Mr. Kemp, a memorial of her respect for his worth, and gratitude for many years of kind and faithful attention to her interest.'" And now there was not a pen good enough in the house for this writing, or a knife sharp enough to mend one. He prepared the paper with pounce, he ruled the lines with the greatest

exactness, thought his mother's sentence was not half so expressive as it should have been. She persisted in saying it expressed her meaning; and the restless lad was at last satisfied.

The kind attentions of Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Kemp were directed to soothe Mary; and every one agreed, that though the prospect of happiness was unclouded, still the breach upon her pleasures was very great. But grief, when slightly founded, where only our own pleasure is concerned, finds relief in tears; and when Mary weighed Esther's advantages against her own privations, she was constrained to allow that her grief was selfish, and that conviction was sufficient for Mary. Fanny Meredith and Jemima now renewed their acquaintance, and all the little news at the Valley and at the Brow were communicated; and Jemima was equally astonished and concerned to find, that the young Mr. Jennings had taken a farm, and with a pomp proportionate to his insignificance, was continually thwarting Michael in every possible way. "We suppose," said Fanny, "that the disappointment about Joe is at the bottom of it;" and here she related all the folly of the young people. "At the last vestry, he himself had pro-

posed a measure, which Michael thought a good one, and immediately joined, very desirous of shewing nothing but Christian kindness towards one who had so continually opposed him in every way. But you know my brother: I need not tell you upon what principles he acts. Well, no sooner did he find that Michael agreed and thought it a good plan, but he found that, upon second thoughts, there were objections to it. And now there is another farmer come in, where poor farmer Newton lived; and there seems likely to be strong opposition in the parish, a thing never known before. However, Mr. Lascelles observed, when Michael mentioned it, ‘I have long been afraid, our sea was too calm, and that we should find it ‘good to be here;’ and then, in his own delightful manner, he continued, ‘Let the winds blow, and the waters rage, we know who is in the vessel.’—And my dear brother came home quite in good spirits.”

The summer glow was on Nature's beauties, the time of day was too warm for open travelling; but some light showers had fallen the evening before, and very heavy rain in the night, so that, though very warm, it was not dusty. They drove slowly, and meant to take a quiet dish of

tea at a rural inn, whose windows overlooked a neat garden, and to proceed in the evening the last seven miles. "How much cooler than I expected," said Esther.

M. The light winds so fan the air, he holdeth——

On the slope of the hill they were ascending, the slanting rays of the sun shed the strongest brilliance; the long bridge before them seemed to reach to the declination of two hills, and as it were, to span them, and between them a rivulet ran over a rocky bed, meeting considerable obstruction from rude masses of stone fringed with weeds of luxuriant growth: these combined with mosses, and a plant somewhat resembling the cole plant, (such as the poor sometimes boil when they have no other vegetable,) in rich profusion, and watered by the late rains, finely contrasted with the white substance of which one hill was formed, and the yellow loam of the other. The curling vapour of a wood fire in a cottage, which seemed almost a speck beneath, formed a picture of rural beauty not unfrequent in the country through which they travelled. But they had got out of the chaise, for the horse felt the heat and the hill; and they were slowly proceeding till they reached the

top, and here the prospect opened in wild magnificence. "How very beautiful," said Esther, as they turned to gaze upon it. To their left, were woods behind woods, the foreground was occupied by dark masses of fir, and the beech around the hill, with here and there the lighter foliage of ash, and the blue Scotch fir, and small tufts of the willow. Indeed, the wood-crowned hill seemed planted by the hand of taste. "I question, if we do not enjoy as much of these beauties as the possessor," said Michael; "to him they are every day pleasures, while we only see them now and then; and there is the house of prayer; and may we not indulge a hope, that some good man like our Mr. Lascelles, watches over his flock, and dispenses the Word of life to his people."

As they were passing, and just about to get into the chaise, two young things jumped from a tree by the side of the road, and seemed anxious to hide. "I think they are birds'-nesting," said Esther. "It is a cruel practice; let us try to persuade them." So Michael, putting his hand upon the shoulder of the foremost, attempted to detain him, asking what he was doing? The ready reply, "*nothing*," was on his tongue; "he was going home."

Michael took him by surprise. "You are birds'-nesting. Now, if I were to come to your father's, and to fetch you out of your nice cottage;" the boys both laughed. "It isn't a nice cottage, 'tis an old totterish place. Father often says, we might as well live in a tree; for when the wind blows, we rock just like the birds." Michael gave them sixpence, and they ran off, promising not to touch them.

Esther. The variety of season is to me always pleasant. Spring is resurrection; summer the perfection of our spring hopes; autumn is so rich in beautiful colours, and winter is so sociable, I always seem to enjoy my dear mother's company more than at any other time.

Michael. I hope, my dear Esther, to learn of you to love winter; but I own I never did love it, and I suppose the reason is, I never lived with a friend, whose society could make me forget the cold and chilling influence. I never did sit down by a winter fire to converse, since Stephen left me. It is true I could go to his fire-side, and enjoy his and his dear wife's company; but then a walk up the Brow steep made the contrast more painful; and poor Betty was never comfortable if I staid till it was dark.

E. The good creature.

M. Yes, I am greatly indebted to Betty; she is one of God's gracious gifts to me; and I may say, she has given me unmixed comfort. Oh, my dear Esther, what dependent creatures we are.

E. Yes: and I ——

M. Let me beg you will say all you think to me, my dearest companion. You are naturally reserved; are you not?

E. Me; oh, dear, no; I try to be so, because I so often have said what I wished to call back; so often have been cautioned by my mother and aunt, not to speak so openly.

M. (*Smiling.*) But you must leave off trying; because I should like to know all you think, without any reserve.

E. Indeed you shall; only promise to correct what is wrong, and then I shall gain by my own mistake.

Michael looked on the dear, open-hearted christian girl, who was now his own, his own while life remained, and the water stood in his eyes; but he rarely wept; so he brushed it away, and turned cheerfully, saying, "Yes, my love, but you must encourage me."

E. How?

M. By making the same promise.

E. How can I? I have heard of you for so many years; you have lived so consistently, so—

M. Oh, hush, hush; you know me not. Heart sins; God looks there, and how I deplore these, he only can know, who knoweth the heart. “As face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man.” The same weaknesses and infirmities, the same difficulties and obstructions in this path; and happy it is for us that it is so. Esther looked as though she would have said, “and wherefore?” “Why, my love, why is Christ said to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Because he was in all points tempted like as we are.”

They were within a mile and a quarter of their destined tea-drinking, when they saw, under the hedge, a very clean looking poor woman, with her baby on her knee, and a girl about four years old standing beside her. She was evidently weeping, and looked hot and weary. Esther turned to Michael, and said, “Do, Michael, ask her if she is not well.” Michael drew up, saying, “Are you well, good woman?” “Yes sure, to be sure, well enough, and

please you ; but," and she looked piteously, sighing, " but I have heard sad news to-day." " Indeed ! What have you heard, my good woman ?" " Why, the first was, that the gude man has fallen in battle, and I have only to pray for strength to keep me from want, and to get bread for my poor bairns." The little girl looked up piteously, as though she understood it. " How far have you walked to-day ?" asked Michael. " I cannot justly say ; it has seemed very long to me. It was only Friday that I got the answer. I went down to the west, you see, Sir, to meet the poor man, and there I got the news : and I had little heart for walking since ; for he was a kind friend of mine, and he never lived to see his young sailor, as he called him, my pretty boy that I have at home ;" and here she wept afresh. " I was thinking, Esther, perhaps the poor thing would be glad of a cast. I could walk beside you for this mile." " Why no, Sir, for me ; but, if the lady would let the poor little maid stand beside her, it would be an unco kindness ; for she is foot sore, and the shoes are nearly come to paper?" and so the poor little thing was kindly and carefully put

in the gig, and the mother persuaded to get in also.

They were not aware that they should pass by that same inn that Fanny and her father had been so kindly received in, a few years before; so they were greatly disappointed at finding the modest little place they meant to rest at, converted into a private house, and themselves obliged to rest at this very handsome well frequented inn; but, before they entered the town, the poor Scotchwoman, whose sense of propriety was very great, insisted on getting down at the toll-gate. "Well," said Michael, as he lifted the child down, "let us look at your little foot; I should like to give you a pair of strong shoes." "The blessings on you, Sir; 'tis a gift, indeed, that; for I must go up to London about the prize money." "Well, get a bed somewhere, and let us see you to-morrow morning by seven o'clock."

At the appointed hour, M'Kenneth came for the shoes, and little Margery kept saying, "thank ye, Sir;" and looking down at her shoes, and walking a little to hear the noise on the boards, and trying to tie and untie them; and when the poor

mother found, that by going through the regular forms, the business might be transacted without a journey to London, she said, "Oh, what a providence as I met you, Sir!"

Michael. "Where are you going now?" and he found, upon inquiry, that she was at that time residing within four miles of the Brow, keeping house for her brother, who was a Scotch gardener, and with whom she had left her young sailor, as she called him. The young infant had borne fatigue well? and the mother was so cheered by the good news, that fifteen miles seemed but a light trip, so completely was she renovated; but, in the midst of her joy, she awoke to a sorrow, that time only could soothe; her kind-hearted William was no more. "Oh, Sir, I hate war; 'tis a cruel profession that, murdering one another; I can't abide it. And now, oh!" Then poor M'Kenneth's heart seemed ready to burst, and she, kneeling before Esther, said, "Dear lady, I do pray the good God to have you in his own care, and may you long live in peace and happiness, and may your children, if you have any, take to good ways, and grow up like ye." Poor Esther was

heartily glad, when the benediction was ended.

The treatment at the White Horse had, as usual, been civil and cleanly; and, in the morning, ere they departed, Michael took an opportunity of seeing the landlady. He said, "Some years ago, Madam, you were very kind to my father and sister, and I assure you your kindness was not lost upon them. Mrs. Walker, too, felt it very sensibly." "Oh, I think I recollect a very pretty looking young woman, and her venerable father. I was glad, Sir, it was in my power to show my gratitude to Mrs. Walker. I hope they are well, Sir." "I thank you, ma'am; never better. My sister is married, and has two children." "Dear me," said the landlady, "why she looked quite a young thing." Michael smiled, got into the chaise, bowed to Mrs. Jenks, and quietly pursued his journey.

But we must now return to the Party that we left at the Brow. "But, come, Sir," said Mr. Brownrigg, in a cheerful manner, "you and I must set out on our afternoon visit." Joe did not know what to make of this, and would gladly have slipt by Mr. Brownrigg, but this latter

was a wag, and had determined not to lose his play ; so, in a chatty familiar manner, he caught Joseph by the arm, and they descended the steep together.

As they drew near Sizors, seeing the little knots of flowers under the windows, " Ah," said Brownrigg, " this is just what I wanted ; I wanted a hint for laying out my garden ; here is exactly the thing ; most tasty." Joe said, " It was very pretty indeed—all Miss Louisa's doing ; that is, she and the boy : to be sure, Miss Louisa did not dig it." " Certainly not," said Brownrigg. Just then, a lady appeared, with flowers, and ringlets set like lime-twigs, for poor Mr. Joseph.

Miss Louisa had been as much upon the fidget to see Mr. Joseph, and was prepared to give him the kindest welcome ; when, contrary to all expectation, her father, who had been out upon business, returned sooner than was expected ; and the little odd boy, who was to have waited at tea, was called to take his master's horse. He, in his roughest tone, said, " Servant, Sir," and walked into the house. " So, Mr. Joseph, you are come to your brother's wedding, I hear." " Yes, Sir," said Joe. " A very sensible man, that ; he is deter-

mined to have a wife who can get her living."

Misfortunes had soured the temper of Mr. Jennings, and the poor girls whom he had helped to spoil, now felt the sting of it, and they were equally to be pitied; and Brownrigg, who had come with a full intention to laugh at them, would have given up the project, had not Joe begun. "Miss Louisa, this gentleman is come to see your garden;" and Miss Louisa, Miss Antoinette, and all the Misses, gathered round to shew it. So they sallied forth, and Brownrigg very knowingly offered his arm to Miss Louisa. "You are going, Sir, I think, to settle in this country." "Yes, Madam; and where can one turn for taste, if not to Sizors? I wish to lay out my garden." Here Joe put in, "I am sure Miss Louisa would shew you, Mr. Brownrigg; wouldn't you, Miss Louisa?" "Yes, certainly, I should be very happy to oblige." Nevertheless, she felt uneasy, for she did not understand this visit; and really thought it odd, that a total stranger should come uninvited.

After wandering about for some minutes, without saying a word, they proposed to return into the parlour to tea; and here they found the poor good-natured, suffering

mother, endeavoured to please all parties, and succeeding with difficulty. "Well, Mr. Joseph, how goes on the flute?" said old Jennings. And he grinned maliciously, as though he longed to laugh at him. "The flute, Mr. Joseph; can you play the flute?" said Brownrigg. "A little, Sir," was the modest reply. "I did not bring it with me, Sir," said Joseph, looking very harmless. "I wish I had, if I had thought Mr. Jennings would have liked to hear it."

This modest reply almost subdued old Jennings, who was not naturally an ill-tempered man. "I remember, my dear," said he to his wife, "when I used to try at it to please you." "It was not the flute, dear," said Mrs. J. "it was the flageolet, if you remember." "True, love, so it was;" and this little good-natured dialogue seemed to put them all right again, when in straggled Miss Fanny from a warm walk, and she seemed to look round for the introduction to the new visitor.

Louisa, looking at Joseph with an air of protection, said, "you forget, Mr. Joseph, to introduce this gentleman." "What! don't you know who it is, love?" said her father. "Dear me, no, Papa; 'tis never the fashion to know any body 'till they are introduced, you know. I should never

pretend to be acquainted ;” and before she could finish her speech, her father burst out, “ Pretend, pretend ; always some pretension or other. Would you pretend to tell me, that you don’t know who that gentleman is. Why is’nt he the rich tobaccoist as have left off business, and have come to settle in these parts ? Is’nt he that nice girl’s uncle, Esther Humphries ? Why, how often have you seen him at church ! Come, come, girls, do leave off nonsense, pray. It’s all very well for fine folks that have got nothing else to do, but for you who have got your living to get ’tis quite out of the way. Never let me hear any more on’t.”

Brownrigg had a great deal of tact, a great deal of kind feeling, and he began to pity the poor Jennings’s ; thought they were silly, harmless girls, and traced a great many of their faults where they were indeed due, to the father and mother. He came upon an errand which he must not forget ; namely, to divert the parties present, and to bring Joe back safe to the Brow. So he said, “ Sir, we young people, you know,” looking arch, “ must needs catch the fashion of the times, even though we may not be as wise as our forefathers.” “ Ha, ha, ha,” said old Jennings ; “ Very

true, Sir; very true;" and seemed exceedingly to enjoy Mr. Brownrigg's wit. "You've not long come from London, Sir, I think?" "Not very long." And now Joe began to hope he should get a little private conversation with Miss Louisa; and he was endeavouring to edge his chair a little closer, but Brownrigg turned from the father, and said, "You have never, ladies, asked me one word of the fashions; though I was in the Regent's Park Sunday three weeks, and passed the king as close as I am sitting to you at this moment." "Did you, indeed, Sir?" said Mrs. J., wondering. "Yes, ma'am: and I thought his Majesty looked remarkably well, and I was very glad of it." And here Joe, who never could let an opportunity slip to tell what he had heard, observed, "that people wer'nt so fond of the king now, and that many people that he knew did'nt approve of his goings on." "Pray, Sir," said Jennings, "what can the people that you know have to do with the king? I'd have you take care, Mr. Joseph, how you get acquainted with such people." Brownrigg fidgetted, looked at his watch, and asked the ladies if they had any objection to a walk? "Not the least," was the reply; and up they started to fetch bonnets, &c.

No sooner did they return, than Brown-

rigg gave his arm to Miss Louisa; and old Jennings, looking out after them, said, "Why, ah, that will do; if the girl can fancy him; and he's foolish enough to take such a doll of a thing, I've no objection."

"And now, which way shall we walk, ladies?" said Brownrigg.

Miss Fanny and Miss Tiny had always been offended with Joe, for his preference to Louisa; so, that when he offered his arm to them, they declined it, saying, "They thanked him, they had rather not." So Joe grew sulky, angry with Louisa, and walked on without a single observation, till they reached the side of the river; when, arm in arm with his two daughters, Mr. Lascelles met them. Brownrigg did not altogether like his post, particularly as the circumstances of the morning had brought Mr. Lascelles in some degree into the plot, with the exception of the kind part Brownrigg was acting; but he was past the age at which we care much for the opinions of others; so he made Mr. Lascelles a very profound bow, and passed on with his lady. "And pray Miss Jennings," said he, "what do you think of your parson?" Had Miss J. known exactly Mr. B.'s opinion, her's would undoubtedly have been the same. At last she ventured to say, "She believed he was a particu-

larly good kind of man ; but he was rather too strict, she must own, for her." " Why, Ma'am, I've been of your opinion," said Mr. Brownrigg, " sometimes. Indeed, I thought so this morning, when he gave us the exhortation." " The exhortation ! Dear me, Sir, what was that ; I did not hear a word of it "—" Why we—" Brownrigg began to repent that he had said any thing but he was in for it—" Why, we had an exhortation to the newly-married at the Brow." " Oh, at the Brow, Sir, not in the church." " No, Ma'am, not in the church." " How long, Sir," said Miss L., if it is not impertinent, pray how long has Mr. Michael Kemp been engaged to Miss Humphries ?" Brownrigg thought it *was* impertinent ; so slightly bending to Miss L., " Really Madam it is a question I never asked." " Pray, Sir," said Miss L., finding it difficult to supply conversation, " What is an exhortation ?" " Why, Ma'am, exhortations are of many kinds ; but the exhortation this morning, was to engage us all to lead a religious life, and for the single to get married as fast they could. Was'nt that it Mr. Joseph ? And you see here, Madam, Mr. Joe and I, in obedience to Mr. L.'s kind command, only waited till dinner was over, and here we are, you see." Miss Tiny, who did not

want wit, added, " But, you see, Sir, as we were not present at your exhortation, we know not well how to profit by it." " A very fair invitation, Madam," said Brownrigg. " Mr. Joseph will doubtless instruct you; but I am engaged, you see."

Joseph neither understood nor relished the joke, but walked on pouting; and Brownrigg being a man of business, kept to his point, wished the ladies good afternoon, and brought Mr. Joseph safe to the Brow.

Joseph's understanding was too limited to perceive the guiding hand, and he was seriously displeased with Louisa, he thought she slighted him; and had no objection, in his present state of mind, to give her up. The only difficulty that remained, was to prevent the visit being repeated.

Brownrigg told the whole to old Kemp, who was very sensible of the kindness; and, in his plain, straight-forward, honest way, said, " We must contrive to send him home; what could we do in such a cottage as ours, Sir, with such a young lady as that?" " Dear me, no; unless Joe had sense to maintain himself, and get a cottage of his own." " No, no, Sir; whenever Joe marries, he must marry a sensible maid-servant, not a fine young lady. He

must have some one with more sense than himself, Sir. The lad's not ill-tempered, but so soon led astray."

After consulting with his wife, who said, "You remember, my dear, what our Michael did before; he sent Joe on some business, for the poor boy likes to be of consequence." They turned to Fanny. "What could we employ Joe about, my dear, just to take him from these Jennings'?" Jem Brown overheard this, and said, "When does Mr. Joseph go home?" "He came with the intention of staying till *Monday*," said Mrs. Kemp; "longer than that, we could not get leave for. Then Joseph must return to his business. Till then, the difficulty is so to engage him, as that he may not think we govern him." "Pray, is'nt Mr. Joseph a nursery-man?" "Yes, and he is really very clever at his business. His master is quite satisfied with him. If you could consult him about heaths, he understands their propagation, and all the American plants. His master is very much satisfied with his care; and Joe is very fond of being consulted." His father turned away smiling, and the conversation ended with "poor dear Joe." But Brownrigg had a deep plot in his head, of which more at a future day.

How some days seem exalted above

others. Tuesday was a day looked forward to with delight, by all this party. "Tuesday, I shall see my dear Esther again," said Mary Humphries; "And Tuesday we shall get home," said Michael and Esther; and many hearts were longing for Tuesday. Last, not least, poor Betty Smith. It was long since her dear master had left home, and the house seemed unked without him. "To be sure, old Mr. Kemp do read the prayer and the chapter, but my master makes so many pretty observations and seems to have such a fine experience.

But the village was not without its spite, though there was so little ground for malignity. Some reported that he had gone away, and never given the ringers; others, that he had run out of church, and never paid Mr. Lascelles for marrying him; and again, that Mr. Lascelles, with his two daughters, was obliged to go to the Brow after his money; that Esther's rich uncle, was going to marry Miss Jennings, and had taken the opportunity of fixing the business, while his miserly nephew was out: it was true he had taken Mr. Joseph with him; but then, he was such a block-head, he could not see an inch before him; that old Mrs. Kemp was left behind, to see that nothing was wasted; and that

poor Margaret and Mary, were obliged to be dressed up by their brother, to make them fit to appear. All this was told to Betty Smith; who, if she had a weak side, erred in this, that she was too willing to lend an ear to foolish reports. Michael always said to her, "Betty, wait till the news is cold; and then, I think, you will not find it worth bringing home." She remembered her master's words, but was apt to forget to apply them. Dear faithful Betty; her heart was so warm with love to her master, that a word of disrespect to him was a sin she could not pardon.

There were a few gentle showers in the early part of the day, but never enough to make the travellers uncomfortable; and their hearts were turned to the praise of him, who had so eminently blessed them. "I wonder what they are all about at home," said Esther. (*Michael smiling,*) "I think some one is longing to see some one," and the tear was in Esther's eye; and "she is a kind mother," convinced Michael he was understood. "I hope all my friends at P—— will be at home, Esther. I shall like to show you my dear Mr. Walker, to whom I owe so much." "Have you not some brothers and sisters at home still?" said Esther. "Yes, one dear little sister about nine, and a brother

seven." "But they are not left at home alone, are they?" "No; my mother has kind neighbours, who takes care when she is absent, and it is a rare thing for her to come out."

As they drew near the turnpike gate, of which the reader has so often heard, they found it a shelter from a violent storm which was just coming on; and they were obliged to rest longer than they could have wished in such a place; for several dropped in, whose conversation was far from pleasing. "You have got a fine new road here," says one to the turnpike collector. "Yes; and a fine deal of money it has cost," says another. "Ah! that would never have been, if it had not been for the parson: his daughter is going to be married to a fine, dashing lawyer, a first cousin of hers: he comes down travelling in his town chariot, and expects to find all the roads just as they are round Lunnen." "I don't think the parson would ever have thought of it," said another, "if it hadn't been for that flourishing sprig. He's quiet enough himself; and beside, he haven't been well enough to ride on horseback for a long time. I heard that our member's son was looking out for the living more than a year ago; but I believe it would have been a tight struggle; for the people

of this village are very fond of the parson's son." There was a quiet old man, who sat smoking in the corner, to the great annoyance of Esther, whose head ached, and could not at that time well bear it. Hitherto he had not spoken, but now he said, "Fond of him? and with good reason. Isn't he a fine young gentleman, and a good young gentleman? and has he not grown up among us? And as for the dashing lawyer you talk about, he's a fine lad; I remember him from a child: why, he's our parson's brother's son, that died in foreign parts. Why, don't you remember, Jem," said he, calling to the turnpike man, who was giving change at the gate, "Don't you remember Mr. Protheroe, that used to jump off his horse, and set him running through the gate and take a long leap, and clear it; and tell me that he would rather pay a penny for a cheesecake than a turnpike; but I used to catch him coming back, when he could not speak for laughing: I used to threaten to have him before the commissioners?" "Why, yes father, I remember it well; and you used to laugh too." "I knew it was all play, Jem. He generally paid double for his gate." "Well, all this is nothing," said the man who first began to grumble. "I say he has given us a

deal of plague: wasn't the road pretty enough and good enough?" "But don't you know, it will save the horses a very heavy drag up that hill?" "Ah! it will save the Reverend, now he has got old, and can't walk except on level ground."

Esther saw that this irritated Michael, and that he was about to speak: and she put her hand upon his arm, and in a low voice, said, "I would not speak now to such a man." "Thank you," said Michael, (*smiling.*) But Mr. Walker was not without a champion, for the old man of the toll gate knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and slipping his arms under his coat behind, said in a fierce tone, "If it does save the reverend, now he has got old, oughtn't we all to be glad? For my part, I hates the man that forgets a good turn. Pray, Mr. Sawyer, who paid your doctor that year that you had the rheumatiz fever? Who used to come with the heaps of nice things to your cottage? You seem to have thrown all the favours to the ash heap." "Me!" "Yes, you Mr. Sawyer: if you have forgot, we haven't. I never had any thing the matter at my cottage, but his kind face was sure to be at the window: and his little ones, when they could but just run about; haven't I seen Miss Sophy—and let me see how old

she was—I think, James, you were nine years old when she was born; and you were thirteen, when you got that hurt. Why, you see, she cou'dn't be more than four, and she used to come with her little frock up round her, and the bundles of rag for you: for, though the nursery maid was with her, she would bring something. Now I know what I think, nothing bites so keen as benefits forgot. Master Shakespeare said that many years ago. Don't you remember, Jem, your grandfather used to sing that song? ‘Blow, blow, thou winter's wind.’” “Yes, I do remember very well, father; and a fine song it was.” “Yes, it is better than all your Talianos; because you see there is a lesson to it, if we do but remember it.”

By this time the shower was over. Michael thanked the turnpike man for his shelter, and left him something to drink. He looked extremely hard at him, as he thanked him, and asked him if he did not belong to the Kemp family? He replied, “Yes; that he was Michael, the eldest son,” thinking it best to satisfy the man's curiosity, that he might get on to his journey's end. They pursued their way, and Michael drew up to the door of his father's cottage, which unfortunately was locked. “What shall we do now, Esther?” At

length they resolved to go over the way to Mrs. Potter's, to get a dish of tea, and to keep watch for the arrival of the little ones. This they did; but scarcely had they drank their second cup, when they saw a neat, careful-looking woman come to the cottage door, with a child on either hand; and pulling the key out of her pocket, closed the door after her. So, after they had finished their tea, Michael took up a small parcel in his hand, and calling to the ostler, begged he would be careful of his horse for the next two days; as, on the following Tuesday, it would have a long journey. They then crossed over to his father's cottage.

The good woman stared when he addressed her. "Thank you, Mrs. Spencer, for your kindness to my brother and sister; I expect my mother home early on Tuesday; till when, we can take care of the children." Mrs. Spencer remembered him, and wished him happy from her heart, for she knew the occasion of his mother's leaving home and curtsyng to Esther, "You will be a happy wife, Ma'am, for Michael Kemp have always been a dutiful son to his mother, and I have always minded that be a sure sign." Esther modestly looked at him, and then at Mrs. Spencer, saying, "I have no fear."

In the mean time, they were endeavouring to make the children familiar, which was rather difficult, it having been long since their brother had been at home, and these little ones had never visited the Brow. "Suppose we have a walk," said Esther; and, before she went out, she took Mrs. S. aside, to enquire what might be most useful to the children, when it was found that a new bonnet for the little maid, and a hat for the boy, would be very acceptable; and Esther soon won their young hearts, by begging them to show her the way to the shop, and presenting them with these little offerings. Mary took upon her to guide Esther, to the new shop, where they sold every thing that was pretty. And Johnny very knowingly told Esther, that "his mother did not think the things so good there, as at some of the old shops;" and Johnny and Mary had nearly quarrelled in defence of their favourite places. It was, "Well, Miss, I have heard my mother say so;" and, in reply, "What can such boys as you know about shops?" But the contest ended delightfully, when each found themselves provided with a handsome covering for the head, at the very place in dispute; and as Mary boasted what nice things they sold, John owned they were better than

he expected; and Mary said, they were uncommonly pretty. "Ah, so they are; but how do you know that my sister has not paid too much for them?" "Oh," said Mary, with a sneer, "as if my sister did not know what to give for things;" and the word sister was spoken with so much endearment, that Esther could not find it in her heart to be angry.

The new bonnet and hat were sent home, and the little ones greatly delighted; and now, between the pleasure of the new dress, the delight of seeing brother Michael, and the new kind sister, the young things could hardly be persuaded to go to rest. Mrs. Spencer was not willing to leave her charge; and taking Michael aside, said, she thought her neighbour (i. e. Mrs. Kemp) would like best for her to stay, and boil the pot for them, and she should do it very willingly; adding, it would be awkward for Esther to find things. And Michael began to think his neighbour was in the right; so he thanked her for her good will, and strolled out that very evening, to give her an offering of gratitude; for he well knew this good creature would not accept any remuneration in money. For many a kind turn had his mother done neighbour Spencer, and she was pleased with the opportunity of

showing her gratitude. “ *How many weighty services may one poor woman perform for another, and how many do they perform, services which no money can repay.*” We are poor creatures after all; and those attentions which touch us most nearly, those indispensable attentions in the hours of sickness and pain, are claimed alike by rich and poor.

The clouds had thickened since their return to P., and the night was stormy, the Sunday morning showery and unpromising; but, by the help of umbrellas and pattens, they reached the church of P. without difficulty; and Jane Kemp looked towards her mother’s seat during the service, to see who was there; and hardly could the honest girl sit out the service for delight. And Michael had heard so poor an account of Mr. Walker at the turnpike, that he was agreeably surprised to find him in the pulpit, and hear him preach from those words of the Psalmist, “ That whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.” He drew so fine a line between the prosperity of the wicked and the prosperity of the righteous, their opposite hopes and fears, and closed with the abiding prosperity of those who trust a Saviour and that fine peroration, “ I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,

nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." And now, as the congregation thickened in the porch, and one waited to pin up her apron, and another to put a handkerchief over her bonnet, Jane Kemp pressed through the crowd to welcome her brother Michael, and to speak to her new sister. But Johnny, with tenacity, kept his brother's hand, and scarcely suffered Jane to disengage him. "Oh, Michael, how are you, and how are they all at home?" and a hundred questions in a minute, as to when they came, and how long they would stay. As they passed down the path Michael had so often swept, he said, "Esther, my dear, this is your sister Jane." Kind looks were exchanged, and the welcome to P. was given. "I'll just run home, Michael," said Jane, "and get leave to come and wait on you to-day. You know, master never gives leave to go out on Sundays; but then he is so fond of you, and knows so well that you would do nothing improper, that I'm sure he would make no objections."

And now again Johnny took his place, while Jane ran home, for every thing that was kind and good was so associated with

the name of brother Michael, that the very children were ambitious of sharing his favour. But they were not destined to reach home without interruption; for, at the door of the Lion stood the redoubtable Mrs. Potter, and they were not able to pass her without manifest rudeness, which Michael could not practise. It was, "Oh, Mr. Michael, you are welcome to P.; well, some people are in luck. Who should ever have thought that I should have seen you driving a fine horse and gig!" Michael was on the point of saying, it was not his horse and gig, when Esther pressed his arm. Michael only replied, he hoped she was quite well. "Oh, quite well, she thanked him, better to live by spite than pity." Michael was about to inquire what she meant, when Esther again pressed his arm; a motion which he now completely understood, and he could not help commending her, as she walked on, and so passed to the cottage of the Kemps.

Neighbour Spencer had laid the cloth, and produced some nice cold beef from a neighbouring eating-house, which, with a rice pudding, made up the dinner. Michael was much pleased to see Jane's attention to Mrs. Spencer, and that she would not suffer her to clear away, but did every thing herself. He thought it becoming,

and took an opportunity of commending her, dwelling upon the kind attentions of their neighbour; and before he went away, he again expressed his gratitude to Mrs. Spencer for her goodness. "You must not think that I cleaned up any thing since your mother went; Jane would run down every evening to clean up. I don't know a cleverer or a steadier girl than Jane Kemp; she is mightily looked upon at the Rectory, I can tell you." Michael observed to Esther "what a blessing had rested on their family, that their father and mother had brought them up in the fear of God; and he could say, that whatsoever they had done it prospered—that he had no fear for any but poor Joe." Mrs. Spencer replied, "Why, poor Joe does very well, I'm sure, at the nursery; he earns his money, and goes on steadily."

Michael thinking it best not to lower his brother in the eyes of his neighbour, said he was glad to hear it, and the subject passed. Esther stayed at home in the afternoon, while Michael and the little ones went to church; and in the evening they all went up to the Rectory to Mr. W.'s lecture. After which, Michael had the pleasure of introducing his bride, and receiving blessings from his early friend. He found Mrs. Walker altered more than her hus-

band, and was delighted to perceive how dutifully their son and daughter conducted themselves. They were invited to spend the following day at the Rectory, and that they might have no interruption, and feel no embarrassment, Michael was in the library with Mr. Walker, and Miss Sophia took Esther into her mother's dressing-room. This quiet, unaffected girl, begged she might be employed in some way, saying, she was so used to work that she was really uncomfortable without something to do. "And now," said Mrs. Walker, "Mrs. Kemp, we are so fond of your husband, that you must tell us all about it;—how you were so happy as to meet with so good a husband, and he to find so nice a wife." So Esther, with her accustomed simplicity, told her story, and put Mrs. W. in possession of what the reader already knows.

"I am persuaded," said Miss Walker, "that if we were to cast our cares, mamma, more simply on God, we should find him directing the minutest of our concerns." "Oh, my love, I have always told you so." "Yes, mamma, you have indeed; but yet I don't know how it is, we never seem to take the experience of another." "Well, that is very true,

Sophia, and every generation knows somewhat of this: I can remember it myself, when my dear mother used to advise me, and I was not undutiful, Sophia, any more than you; yet I was too apt to think mamma viewed things through a dark medium, and yet surely there never was a more cheerful creature, nor one who looked on the world with a more loving eye. Alas! we sometimes see the excellencies of those we love too late." Sophia looked as if she would have said, "I am sure, mamma, I can see all your's;" and the returning look acquitted her of every thing but want of experience; and Esther understood it all, and began to esteem these dear friends, of whom Michael had so often spoken to her with that love and respect which they merited. She was trimming up a cap for Mrs. W., and it was done so neatly and handily, that Mrs. W. said, "I should like to have you for a milliner of all things." "Oh, ma'am, I wish it were not so far, I should like to work for you." "Well, my dear girl, this is very kind of you; you will think of me, and wish me well, I know; and let your prayer be directed for me to the throne of mercy, that the truths I believed in my health may be my support in age, when the silver cord is loosed, and

the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern ; then when this dust shall return to the earth as it was ; then pray for me, that my spirit may return happily to God who gave it." It was too much for Sophia ; the tears were streaming down her cheeks, and she said, " O my dear, my precious mamma, don't talk so." " My love, my dear Sophia," replied her mother, in all the beautiful parts of the Monument of Parental Affection, none ever struck me as so beautiful as that part where the excellent Joshua says, ' As we must all die, I think it unhappy when a man is approaching death, that either he or his friends should fear to make it the subject of conversation ; to meditate and speak upon it is a duty even in the days of health.' "

" Too, too true, dear mamma, but I often wish I might be allowed to escape death, or rather that I might so pass from time to eternity as to take all my dear friends with me, never to experience the pang of separation. After having loved you, my dearest father, and my beloved brother, as I do love you, to think of being separated ; oh, I cannot bear the thought." " Well, my precious girl, leave it, ' sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' But Sophy," said her mother, twisting the ringlets of

her hair between her fingers, "is there not some other person whom you would be very sorry to leave?" "Yes, you little sly mamma; there is certainly, and what harm?" "None at all, my precious girl." Esther connected this with the story she had heard at the Turnpike, but she went on without betraying any symptoms of understanding what was said. "How long are we to have you here, Mrs. Michael?" enquired Mrs. W. "O, ma'am, we take leave to-day; we must be off early to-morrow, for our business requires us, and we left company at home." And now Esther enquired respecting Jane, saying, that their neighbour had given her an excellent character. "And she well deserves it," said Mrs. W., "she is quite a Kemp." "It is a great advantage, ma'am," said Esther, modestly, "to have good parents." "Ah, it is indeed," answered Sophia; "we shall never be aware of the advantage till we compare the effect of irregular principles." Esther then mentioned the Jennings family, and observed, that without any particular vice, they were always uncomfortable and unhappy, and yet they were not wanting in affection; there was a feeling of kindness. "Yes, yes," replied Mrs. W., "this is all the cry of nature, but there is no Christian rule

teaching to bear and forbear, no plan going out in acts of kindness and consideration for others; it is all with impulse, soil without culture." Mrs. W. enquired if Esther was not the niece of a worthy man who had called there some time since, and had gone on some business to a person who kept a public-house in that place? "Yes, madam," said Esther, "it was my uncle; he knew Mrs. Potter's uncle, and now I think of it, he desired me to enquire how she was going on. She spoke to us in a very rough odd way."

Mrs. W. I believe she goes on much as usual, we see nothing of her at church, and her distiller and her brewer have, I believe, set her up again for their own benefit. I hear she is obliged to give in her accounts every Saturday, and has only the pleasure of keeping a public-house for her pains.—"Dear me," said Esther, looking up with natural astonishment, and Mrs. W. seemed to join in her wonder.

Sophia. "But, mamma, if no one were to keep a public-house, would it not be very inconvenient?"—(*Mrs. W.*) "Certainly, my love, I can perfectly suppose a public-house to be kept without any excess." "How could that be, mamma?" "Not without a man in it, my dear, and that man a resolute as well as a worthy cha-

racter. In the first place, he must determine never to draw beer, or give liquor to a person who has had enough; and he must show some particular kindness in other ways to those whom he thus offends; he must always shut up at ten o'clock, and whatever he refuses must be refused in a spirit of gentleness, to convince the persons that the refusal was for their benefit; and they have so many ways of doing good, they might sell at an under rate those provisions which they could no longer produce to their customers; they might employ them; about the yard or stables; in short, there are many ways in which a publican may be kind, as they are in the midst of a profusion of the good things of life."

"But, my dear mamma, they must pay for them as well as other people." "True, Sophia, but then they would spoil if they were kept; in short, love, I think that there is no possible situation in which a man is exempt from glorifying God. I know two instances in point. Many years ago, a friend of mine came late to a village inn, and had little hope of being admitted, for they had tried at several without success, and the rain came down in torrents. They were in an open carriage, and began greatly to fear they should get no shelter.

A clown, whom they met upon the road, kindly offered to conduct them to one where he was almost sure they would get a bed. The doors were all closed, but they observed a light in a small room which formed an angle of the building, and clearly distinguished a woman kneeling. I heard my friend say, that amid the darkness of the heavens and the descending showers, and their almost hopeless exposure, the sight of this calm devotion was interesting and affecting beyond measure. On the following morning, my friend spoke to the landlady, expressing pleasure and surprise at her employment, when the landlady replied, 'I can see no reason why one may not pray in a public-house as well as any other.' There was great truth in the observation ; it would be well if it were more generally prevalent.

" Another instance may be adduced of a highly respectable woman, who keeps a very large inn, and in every sleeping-room is placed a Bible, and the whole business of that house is conducted upon those principles ; and it was the beautiful observation of the landlady, '*there is room for Him in the inn.*' Certainly the disadvantages are great, but not insuperable." Just here the door opened, and the servant said, " Mr. Walker would be glad to speak with

Mrs. Kemp ;” and Miss Sophia accompanied her to her father’s study. He kindly extended a hand to her, and said, “ I must consider you, my good girl, as a part of my flock ; your good man here is so natural to us all, that we feel a right to an interest in all that concerns him.” Esther could only bow and look down modestly, for her heart was too full to speak. “ The ways of Providence, my children, are wonderful, and if our paths are chequered with sorrow, they may be always traced to our sins. Remember, afflictions rise not out of the dust, he doth not willingly afflict. Whence come wars and fightings ? In short, I could multiply instances to prove, that were not sin in the world, there would be no sorrow ; and that if we desire to live quiet and peaceable lives, we must live in all godliness and honesty. It is a generally received opinion that man is born to trouble, and so he is ; but wherefore ? Because his nature is sinful, his habits sinful, and require the chastisements of a Father. But, alas ! his stripes are fewer than our crimes, and lighter than our guilt. I feel great delight, my young friends, in vindicating the ways of God to man, and in proving to you, that if it were possible to lead a sinless life, it would be a life of unabated felicity. Yet

there is one sorrow that every heart must experience—a sorrow which our dear Lord drank deeply, the contradiction of sinners. We must endeavour so to conduct our little bark through the waves of this turbulent world, as to give as little occasion of offending as may be. But, my dear young friends, rely upon it, however for a time the sunshine of prosperity may cheer your path, there is that hatred in the world to all that is holy, that even your careful walking will be an offence, your religion hypocrisy, and you must get yourselves, in these hours of sorrow and affliction, to your strong hold. Now observe the blessing whereunto you may always resort.”

The reader will, perhaps, think there was something gloomy in this address of Mr. W.’s, and that he was anticipating evil, when he should have only touched gay subjects; but the fact was, he was not well; he had experienced ingratitude from those he had obliged, and he looked upon Michael as an untried voyager, and was willing to prepare him for the ills of life. We do not pretend to defend this anticipation of evil, but it is natural to the experienced voyager to point out the shoals and the quicksands. But it was evident that Sophia, the young and lively Sophia, thought that papa looked on life with a

gloomy eye. She looked on Michael, and said, "Poor dear papa, he has not been well lately, Mr. Kemp." "My dear child," replied her father, "I am much better; and it is not as you think, Sophy, illness, that makes me give this caution to my young friends; as yet, they are fair weather sailors." Esther shook her head. "Well, if not," said Mr. W. smiling, "at least, my dear, you have borne the yoke in your youth."

By this time Mrs. W. joined them, and Sophia said, "Dear papa is very low to-day, mamma." His dear wife sat down by him, took his hand in hers, and in a voice heard by none but her beloved partner, whispered, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." And again, "I will strengthen thee, and uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Their time passed now in communications upon the part of Michael, on some little disagreeables in his parish: his farm lay at a distance from the others, and as the reader well knows, it was hilly; and, in the late determination to repair the roads, some of the farmers had observed that the road to Mr. Kemp's farm was of no good to any but himself; and then another said, that it was making them a quarter of a mile of road to go to see Mr. Kemp. "But then,"

said young Mr. Jennings, "Mr. Kemp is such a good man; it is honestly worth the money."

Perhaps the reader may have felt that, of all things, to bear a sneer is the hardest, and Michael felt it so: he never had assumed any thing to himself; he never had looked down upon others; and, why they should be so very spiteful he could not understand. "Not understand that! why, I thought, Michael, you had read your Bible," said Mr. Walker. "Yes, Sir, I hope I have." "Well, Sir, it is there written, '*If a man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.*'" "One of my poor old workwomen, Sir," said Michael, "wanted relief from the parish, and they could not even let her pass: it was, 'Dear me, *you* want relief of the parish. I thought these *godly* *gospellers* always provided for their own. Surely Mr. Kemp forgets: we had a fine sermon a Sunday or two ago about that.' And then Mr. Jennings put in his word again. 'So, Goody, you see: that they who preach the Gospel are to live upon the Gospel.' I bore it in silence, but the poor old woman could not. 'Well, Sir, what do you hope to live upon?' Just then Mr. Lascelles entered: they were hurrying business over, that they might settle with-

out him ; but no sooner did he take his chair, than the tone was somewhat altered ; but the old woman, who knew her strength when the dear Reverend came in, was resolved to make them ashamed, and continued, ‘ I should *think*, gentlemen, that you all hoped to live upon the Gospel ; my Bible tells me, that *there is no other name given.*’ ‘ What’s all this, Dame Jenner?’ said Mr. Lascelles, rising ; I then spoke, for I thought I could explain it better. ‘ It seems to be the wish of the parish, Sir, that I should provide for my own poor ; and, if this is general, it will come to the same thing, I suppose.’ ‘ Undoubtedly,’ said Mr. Lascelles ; ‘ but it is an unheard of proposition, I believe.’ ‘ True,’ said Mr. Jennings, ‘ but Mr. Kemp is an uncommon man.’ And now I am almost ashamed to tell you, Sir, what this kind friend said ; but I am quite aware, that he did it with a view to keep up my spirits, for he saw I was hurt. ‘ I quite agree with you, Sir ; and as you so justly appreciate his merits, Mr. Jennings, I hope you will endeavour to imitate him.’ ” “ Ah, I can fancy Lascelles when he said this. There is no man like him for putting down impertinent people. But he had not quite finished : ‘ I hear with concern, gentlemen, that some of you are capable of turning the sacred truths of our

holy religion into ridicule. Some sneer at the word "Gospel," others, at being "born again." Gospel, gentlemen, means glad tidings; hopes of salvation to lost, undone sinners. Being "born again," means that change of heart and of life, without which our Saviour himself assures us, 'No man can enter the kingdom of heaven.' Now, to be capable of jesting with such awful truths, proves a state of extreme depravity. Oh, never may I hear, never again, I trust, that those, over whom God has placed me, are capable of jesting with their eternal hopes;' and he seated himself, and there was a silence of some minutes before the business of the day went on."

"You see, my good young man," said Mr. Walker, "you have been prosperous, and for a time all was well; indeed, I have heard in a roundabout way from your sister Jane to Sophy, from Sophy to mamma, and from mamma to me, that these Jennings' were not unwilling to share your prosperity, but that you had too much discretion either to link yourself, or to permit Joe to form a permanent connection with persons whose piety was at least doubtful; and as this was the case, they are not only prejudiced but mortified." Michael shook his head, and said, he was sorry

Jane should trouble them with his trifling concerns.

“Nay,” said Mrs. Walker, “you must not blame Jane; we are always glad to hear how you are going on, and I often say myself, “Well, Jane, what news from the Brow?” “That was a very foolish affair. Sir, you know my brother Joseph has not much sense, poor fellow.” “Well, Sir, you must not be surprised when you disappoint people, especially prejudiced people, that they should retaliate, and at least endeavour to make you feel a portion of that spleen that rankles in their own bosoms. I have frequently been led to compare a prosperous person to a young child: as soon as it begins to take notice, we are delighted with its infant ways; and we love to see the little patting feet upon the floor, and to hear the sound of its melodious voice; and when it has learnt to combine and furnish a sentence, all it says is witty and well meant; but when it reaches its fourth or fifth year we begin to look for a little study, for obedience; it must no longer run on and be listened to, and we forget that the poor little traveller is walking in nature’s road, the very road in which we have encouraged its footsteps. Now it is really wrong to be angry at the folly we have fostered, but if the dear infant

has stood all this prosperity, and is not to be spoiled by this unqualified indulgence, we are certainly called upon to love it unreservedly. But its brothers and sisters feel that they have the same claims, the elder ones more, and the young ones are slipping into his very place. Thus it is, a popular man appears, every one makes way for him, and the breath of praise follows him. He can hardly do wrong if he has sense, and above all, if he has piety, he bears it meekly, and is not the worse for the adulation. But there is a time when this also must pass, and they expect either to share his pleasures, or that he should resign his high place. If, like the spoiled child, he bears it loftily, he is sure to suffer; and if, like the meek child, he takes it patiently, he must nevertheless resign his popularity, and give way."

"I thank you, Sir, for this lesson. I feel its truth, we shall fatigue you.—I think, Esther, we must be going." Farewells were exchanged, and the blessing of his early friend rested on him.

It would be endless to describe all that passed at the cottage; how the little ones would fain see the Brow, and hoped brother Michael would let them come some day; and the thanks to their kind neighbour, &c. &c. But one thing we must no-

tice. Mrs. Potter would not suffer them to depart without a short interview; she had by some means learned who Esther was—that she was niece to that very Mr. Brownrigg who had thwarted her schemes, and was the particular friend of her uncle's housekeeper. This was the more offensive, as Mrs. Potter had high ideas of the rights of relationship, and considered their property, whether acquired or inherited, justly due to the next heir; and though a slight curve in her own favour, from any other person would have been passed over as irremediable; in the present case, it was a sin not easily pardoned: she forgot her delinquencies, and wondered any one else should remember them. If any person reminded her, that she had not behaved well to her uncle or to Mrs. Tucker, she would toss her head, and say, “Young people would be young people; and she had always *a witty tongue, worse luck.*”

But to return: she waylaid Michael and Esther, and though they passed on the opposite side, she nevertheless contrived to cross them, for she clearly saw that neither Esther or Michael wished to recognise her; so, with a boldness natural to persons of her character, she began. “Well, Mrs. Kemp, so you was a Miss Brownrigg, I find. Pray, how's your uncle?

Please to tell him that I shall do remarkably well, though I have been cheated out of my rights. Thank God, I have got friends as well as another." Esther could make no reply, for she did not understand it. " You have heard your uncle talk of me, I dare say?" " No, ma'am, never." " No? why that's very particular, I think, but that's no matter—Well, you please to tell him from me, that though I am defrauded of my just dues, I am going on remarkably well; but it seems the fashion now-a-days for servants to get into their master's places." Michael was too well used to Mrs. Potter to reply to this; and, though he perfectly understood her insinuation, he passed it as though he had not heard it. He walked forward to the stable to see to his horse, and Esther curtsied, and went in to her father's cottage: she did not close the door, lest it should be said she had shut the door in her face; but she went in, and she heard Mrs. Potter say, " The manners of the *canal*;" she had picked up this bit of French from the captain, when he had lodged at her house: it was lost upon Esther, who knew nothing of the French tongue, and she only heard a sort of muttering, and saw the angry gestures of the displeased landlady.

We will not fatigue the reader with all

the adieus of the little people, or the kind wishes of neighbour Spencer, but we will join the travellers as they were ascending the steep to the Brow. "And here they are," said Betty Smith.—"Here's my master, ma'am," half opening the door where Mrs. Finch was sitting. And now the little chit-chat of what had passed on both sides occupied them while they took their tea; for though it was nearly eight on the Tuesday evening ere they reached their home, it was not so late but Esther said, "Oh! I must run down, Michael, and speak to my mother." "Well, as soon as I have seen to my horse, I'll run with you." "Just one cup of tea, Michael." "Oh, I don't mind my tea; I must see to my horse, the poor beast has travelled well."

And now, reader, fancy the first meeting of the mother and aunt, with their darling Esther. It was, "Well, love, and so you are safe home, and I am glad to see you." "Yes, mother, and I hope you will often see me; you must come to the Brow to us, we shall think it a dull day that you do not look in upon us." "Hetty, love, 'tis a steep hill, I think you must run down to us. And so you've seen every body, dear, all Mr. Kemp's relations?" "Yes, and I have seen his good Reverend, and Mrs. Walker, and Miss; they are the

kindest people." "Well, you are a happy girl, Esther, and I am glad to see it, dear." "And to share it, my dear mother," said Michael, looking with kindness. "Why, that can't be long, Mr. Kemp, you know, we ben't young." "Dear mother, don't try to make my heart ache, pray don't." "Now?" said Margaret Beal; "you are wrong. If your mother is a Christian—" "If," said Esther. "Yes, *if*," said her aunt, "if your mother's a Christian, what have you got at the Brow; nay, what is there in all this world that's to be compared with her inheritance? Did not the dear Saviour tell us, that it had not entered into man's heart to conceive the glory. Do you believe what he says, Esther?" "Dear aunt, *do* I believe? sure I do." "Well, if that *is* sure, you can't grieve that your mother and I draw near our inheritance." "But nature, aunt—nature will have way." "Ah!" said Margaret, "don't I know it? Don't I feel it, child?" But this I must say, I don't give way to it—no, I try every day to loosen my affections from you and your mother, and to lay hold by faith of the hope set before me looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher; and I do find, my child, that my prospects brighten, but I often think of what that good man, Mr Romaine, says, 'Nay,

but thou dost *not* believe. Could a condemned malefactor with a pardon in his pocket fear condemnation?" We certainly live below our hopes, or death could have nothing gloomy for the Christian; my prayer is a very short one, and often repeated—Lord, increase my faith." Now, though this was calculated to cheer the heart in a Christian point of view, it did not cheer poor Esther. It was true, she was settled happily in every way, but she and her mother had struggled so many years together for the necessaries of life, that they certainly became more endeared than most parents and children are, however tender that tie.

And now, when the struggle was no longer needful, to think of separation, she could not bear it; she was almost ready to long for her old cares, provided she might keep her old comforts. Thus it is, we find trials heavy at the time, and almost overlook the accompanying mercies; they pass us, we fancy them light, and almost wish them back again. "Well, good night, good night, dear friends;" and they reascended to their dwelling, thoughtful and prayerful.

When Michael felt how this little interview had depressed Esther, he was almost sorry he had taken her; and he said,

“ The painful trial, my love, will not come one moment the sooner; let us enjoy the present.” She could only say, “ Yes,” for her heart was very full. It is somewhere said, “ It is not on hearts that yield the soonest, that sorrow makes the deepest impression;” and this is well, for what frame could stand ready and continued impression. No, we are mercifully formed of various moods, and our trials suited to our temperament; yea, even as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

On the following morning, Mrs. Finch, Jemima, and Esther, were delighted to see Fanny ascending the Brow, and with a merry little curtsy, “ Glad to see you, my dear Mrs. Kemp; come to pay the bride a visit. Rely upon it, you will have people to call, and I am come first.” “ People to call?” said Esther. “ Yes, my dear; I think my news is true; I heard that the Jennings’s were all coming up this morning.” “ Very well,” and she went on with the work she had in her hand. “ Are these your neighbours, Mrs. Kemp?” said Mrs. Finch. “ Yes, madam, they are the daughters of a farmer here, a man who has done very well; but the times, and one thing or another, have injured their property.” “ The times have

been hard indeed," said Mrs. Finch, "but they have been made harder by want of management, I believe; pretty many of us have stepped a little out of our station, and, instead of being farmers, have tried to be gentlefolks; and really this is hardly to be excused, for our station is so very comfortable. And why should we wish to be dressed up, Mrs. Meredith; for my part, I am never so comfortable as in my every day clothes: if one is but clean, it is all one can desire." "True, ma'am, but I think young people do like to be dressed; I am sure I can't forget, some years ago, when good Mrs. Walker fitted me out to come to you. How very much pleased I was; and now, to be sure, I don't care about such things, but there is a great deal of difference. I do believe Miss Jemima never did care for dress." "Different people have different snares," said Jemima, "but I am not coming to confession." "You were a good little girl, and we all liked you very much, and were very sorry to part with you," said Mrs. Finch. "Dear, kind mistress," and she kissed Mrs. Finch's hand. There is something very endearing in genuine affection: the heart is hard indeed, that is not touched by it.—"But see," said Mrs. Finch, "are not these the ladies from

the Rectory? Is not that Mrs. Lascelles coming up the hill?" "Dear me, no," replied Fanny, "Mrs. Lascelles never comes out, her health is so very delicate." "Who can they be, then? and they are very near." "Oh," said Esther, "it is the Miss Jennings'." "The Miss Jennings! and who are they? Oh, I remember the ladies you expected; these are specimens truly." And now the stiff rapper sounded; stiff, I say, for it was rarely used at the Brow. "Is Mrs. Kemp at home, Betty?" and Betty was heard to reply, "Yes, ma'am," and the ladies were ushered in to the large parlour, and Betty went to tell her mistress, who was seated in the small room with Mrs. Finch and Miss Jemima. "You will go in with me, will you not?" said Esther, "for I shan't know what to say." "Oh! we will all go in, if you like it," said Mrs. Finch. "We had better drop in one by one," said Jemima, "we shall frighten them, such a party at once." "Not so soon frightened, I assure you," said Fanny. So it was settled, that Esther and Fanny should go in first, and Mrs. Finch and Jemima should drop in afterwards.

The bride had her little quilled cap, with a plain white ribbon crossed at the top; her clear book muslin handkerchief,

her checked muslin apron, her small corded buff-striped gown, short sleeves with a narrow ruffle. Her mother had brought her up to this dress, as she could then dip her hands into any thing without soiling her clothes; so that, with the help of a very large pincloth, Esther could be able to do any thing in the house, and yet be ready to see her customers in one minute.

In this simple dress the bride entered her parlour. Miss Jennings had a small hat and feather, and her very pretty hair done in hundreds of curls. Miss Tiny had a very elegant veil over a neat straw bonnet tied with pale blue ribbon. Miss Amelia Jennings had a feather in her straw bonnet. They had all parasols, coloured silk spencers, and plenty of black ribbon round their ancles. They talked of the heat, and produced very elegant fans, which they flirted with a grace.

“Happy to see you looking so well, Mrs. Kemp,” said the eldest Miss Jennings. “I fear you have found the weather very unpleasant,” said Miss Tiny, “during your *tour*. Where was you in that horrid storm?” Esther replied, with her native simplicity, “we stopped at a turnpike-gate, ma’am.” “You have been to Bath, I think, ma’am,” said Miss Jennings. “No, ma’am, we have been to Mr. Kemp’s

father's." "Dear me, Tiny! what stories people do tell!" "And good people too," said Tiny. Wasn't it James Brown that told us Mrs. Kemp and her husband were here?" "That was very true, ma'am," said Esther; and here the three ladies had much difficulty to keep their countenances. It struck them as very remarkable, that any person should go visiting to a house where nobody was at home; and they could not refrain from enquiring if they understood rightly that Mrs. Kemp was at the Brow, while they were at P. "Quite right," said Esther; and Fanny, seeing Esther was at a loss, in her own merry way told the story. "My father and my mother came to my brother's wedding; you must remember that, Miss Jennings, for I believe you were there." Miss Jennings bowed, and did not look very sensible. "My mother left a kind-hearted neighbour to take care of my young brother and sister at home. She remained here till Monday morning, when she left us. You, my dear Mrs. Kemp, I believe left P. in the beginning of the day; for I think you said, you met my dear father and mother at a little distance from the fifteenth mile stone?" "Yes," said Esther, very quietly. "Oh! I beg your pardon," said Miss Jennings, "I thought

you had been to Bath, or some such place. Is P. a very pretty place?" "Oh, very pretty," said Fanny, "full of such beautiful trees." "Is there any assembly there, or a play-house?" "Oh dear, no; and if there was, of course we should not go there." "Why, you do not think there is any harm, do you, Mrs. Kemp?" "To me, madam, it would be wrong." "Well, for my part," said Miss Jennings, "it always does me good, for one learns such uncommon fine lessons against all that is wrong. Shakespeare, and Gray, and Lord Byron, and Hudibras, that wrote 'the School for Scandal.' Oh, that Charles! he's a delightful creature! and then his brother pretending to be so good!—such a hypocrite! I dare say you remember Mrs. Kemp?" "I do not, indeed." At this moment, to the relief of all parties, Mrs. Finch came in. Mrs. Finch was of that quiet order of beings, asserting nothing, claiming nothing; yet, with a rational, consistent mind, acting in a firm plain manner, possessing a fine person rather above the common size, what you would call a comely woman, and whose years seemed to claim the privilege of respect, and was allowed to be what her departed brother called her, "a nice woman." Her steady walk to her seat, in

the midst of Miss Jennings's communications, seemed to put a damp upon them, and to raise the spirits of Esther; for Fanny was of that playful turn of mind, that has a keen sense of the ridiculous, and she had been mischievously disposed to bring the conversation forward again. So she said, "These ladies, Mrs. Finch, were speaking of the advantages of the theatre, and of what fine lessons are to be learned there. What do you think?" "For my part," said Mrs. Finch, "I am no judge; I never was at a play, I had always something else to do; my father had a very large farm, and my brother, when I lived with him, you know, had this farm. I was always obliged to be up very early, to see after the servants, and indeed to work for myself, as all farmers' daughters must. So, by the time gentry were going to the play, I was thinking of going to bed." The Miss Jennings looked rather queer: it bore hard upon their own station; and however Miss Jennings and Miss Amelia might feel, Miss Tiny, with an undaunted flippancy, began. "That might be the fashion in your days, ma'am, but we were brought up quite different; I never liked farming business for my part, and couldn't make a bit of cheese or any thing of that sort." "I suppose your land is

arable?" said Miss Jemima. "No indeed," said Miss Tiny, "there's plenty of butter and cheese made on our farm." Mrs. Finch, when she was stirred by any thing which she thought really wrong, could give a plain lecture with very good sense, and it struck her regular mind in a most blameable point of view, that young women without any property should be brought up to do nothing. So she said, "I cannot tell of what use the present mode of education of farmers' daughters may prove, but it strikes me that it can only lead to poverty and distress. Farmers' sons must be afraid of marrying a wife who can bring them no money, nor help to get any. Gentlemen would not, of course, marry the daughters of their tenants, if they did it could not make either party happy. If they marry tradesmen, and know nothing of trade, they can be of no use; and however kind a husband may be to his pretty wife for two or three months, before the first year is over he will begin to wish her to be of some use. I have heard Mr. Cooper say, that our good Creator formed us all to do something. The farmer's wife ought certainly to know how every thing should be done, if she does not do it; a tradesman's wife should serve in the shop. A gentleman's wife

should know more than I can name; she should be quite a companion for him, my dears, and that's what no farmer can afford to have his daughter taught."

This quiet sensible speech had the effect of silencing the party except Miss Tiny, whose levity was incorrigible. "I should think, ma'am, every body knows their own business best; my pa and ma always wished us to be happy. I have often heard pa say, young people would be young people; time enough for sorrow, when the black ox treads on your toe. Pa never liked to see us moping; and ma always said, she loved her girls to see the world;—didn't she, Lou'y?" Miss Lou'y was too deeply offended, she only bowed her head, and looking at something which hung before her, whether watch or not I cannot say, pretended that the time she could spare was elapsed, and with many dignified bends and elegant tosses of her head, she bade adieu to Mrs. Finch and the ladies, only turning to Mrs. Kemp, hoped they should be good neighbours; and away tripped the Miss Jennings's.

Mrs. Finch, with her arms folded, sat musing, at last exclaiming, "Poor silly, very silly young creatures! I do pity you. Do you know, my dear," turning to Mrs. Kemp, "if the report I heard was true,

that their father was got very low in the world?" "No, madam, I really do not know; I never saw these young ladies more than two or three times, once when they wished to employ me about some dresses, and once at my marriage, when you may remember they came to church." "Yes, indeed, I do, and thought it very indelicate." Mrs. Finch's visit continued only a few days after Michael's return; she had promised Fanny to spend one day there, and it was pleasing to see the neat happy young creature receiving her old mistress. There was no pretension, there was no apology; she gave the best she had to offer, and by one of those unaccountable propensities in children, for which it is impossible to assign a cause, the little Fanny, hitherto as shy as possible, clung closely to Mrs. Finch and Jemima.

Some long-headed parent might have foreseen future advantage in this infantine endearment; but Fanny's simple mind built no castles for her baby, she only said, "I must bring her up, ma'am, to wait on you; aunt Kemp must teach her to plait your caps, and I must make her a tidy maid." But not to dwell on trifles, we must bid farewell to Mrs. Finch, and allow her to return to her well ordered home, and passing a few months

with the new wedded pair, must visit Brownrigg in his cottage. It was furnished with great regard to comfort, and as a part of its furniture, his neat little maid Peggy was brought down to the country. It was late for Brownrigg to begin new habits, and at one time it was feared he would have returned to his villa at Walworth; he wanted his little bit of fish, his porter, his hot roll in the morning, and Peggy was but an indifferent bread maker; but these difficulties were removed one by one, and his gentle Esther was such a load-stone, and little Michael Meredith his daily visitor, outweighed the sensual part, so that by degrees he forgot the inconveniences of his new residence, and settled quietly down.

It was about eight months after the marriage of Michael that Brownrigg, with Meredith's boy on his knee, was sitting at the Brow, and the child, with the confidence of infancy, had fallen asleep in his arms, the clock struck eight, and the servants, in a quiet state of expectation, were waiting the prayer bell; and Michael, from a mixed motive, forbore to ring. Brownrigg, with innocent yet mischievous drollery, kept his seat, wondering in his own mind how Michael would act. He had never been placed in these circum-

stances before ; it is true, they had often knelt together at the throne of mercy, and Michael had read the prayer and the chapter when he was present, but then he had been requested to do so ; he had never been the leader or director of the worship in Brownrigg's presence, fearful of offending "whom he wished much to persuade." He stood with uneasy hesitation, holding a pen which he had been mending against the clear evening light. Brownrigg turned round. "Well, Sir, you take some time to mend your pens." "No, Sir, but—" "Yes, but you are hesitating whether you shall admit such an infidel fellow as I am to worship God with you." Esther's heart yearned over her uncle, "Oh no, my dear uncle!" "Well, well," said Brownrigg, "more of this another time." "Now ring the bell, my good sir, and do not keep your servants wishing me out of your house."

Michael's mind was a little disturbed by this slight circumstance : it happened that the chapter in course was that where Daniel prayed three times a day, notwithstanding the prohibition of Darius ; and an ironical smile played on the lips of Brownrigg. As soon as the prayer was over, William was ordered to take the young Michael down to the mill, not that there

was any anxiety on the part of Fanny, for he was so frequent a visitor to Brownrigg, and she so well knew his care and kindness, that her heart rested completely. But Esther thought it was late, and it would save her uncle that bit of road; so it was, "Good night, my man," on the part of Brownrigg, and a long drawn yawning "Good night, sir," on the part of little Michael.

Brownrigg went to his home, and a few evenings after, when they met again at his own house, the tea-things were no sooner cleared than he began. "And so, sir, you give me up as a decided enemy to all that is good and excellent." Michael, though not quite prepared for this attack, could not affect ignorance of his meaning; and, as he remained silent, Brownrigg went on. "But if you, sir, are indifferent whether I pray to God or not, I should have hoped my little Esther here would have no objection to meet her uncle in the kingdom of heaven." The tears fell fast from Esther's eyes; Brownrigg could not bear to see it; he got up, took her hand in his, pressed it, stroked it, and looked at her, and we may truly say, that Michael, like Nehemiah, prayed to the God of heaven. "I certainly," said he, "feel that I was very wrong, sir, in regarding the presence

of any man when a positive duty was in question; but if I did err, I can truly say it was through fear of assuming to teach one whom I much respect." "Yes, yes," said Brownrigg, "I know and feel that you do respect me; every part of your conduct, since we first met, proves it; but you do not, you cannot respect me upon a religious ground. Still, let me beg of you, do not think worse of me than I merit; do not suppose, because I have no family worship myself, that I wish to prevent you and Esther from doing what you think right. I think it a good custom, a very good custom, provided it is well conducted, and people behave as they should do before they kneel down, and after they get up; but to see a man flump down on his knees, full of evil tempers, and to hear him, as soon as he gets up, begin some conversation about this work-a-day world, I must say it is very inconsistent, and the prayer had much better be let alone. As for me, I am a pepper hot fellow, and I cannot answer for myself two minutes together." Here Michael ejaculated, "Who can." "Well, sir, with this conviction in my mind, how can I offer to play the priest even in my own house; in another man's it is different. I am rather supposed there to conform than to lead."

Michael. “ But do you not think, sir, that it is a good thing to place a check upon our tempers by thus openly devoting ourselves every morning and every evening?” “ Well, sir, it may be good, but I never yet thought it would be good for me; we are of different temperaments, some calm and composed like you, others boiling over every minute like myself.” “ But my dear uncle,” said Esther, “ God, who formed us, hears our prayers for the correction of every failing, and I know I have heard you say, you wished you were not so hot.” “ Why, Hetty, child, “ I thought confession was a sacred thing, even in the Romish church.” I just mention this little trait in Brownrigg’s character, that the reader may see he was not bigoted to his own opinions, that he could listen and allow others to point out even his defects; and here he turned the conversation, by observing, that he was somewhat surprised by seeing what a train of servants they kept now; “ why, I counted seven coming into family prayers the other night.” “ Ah! that is all Esther’s doings, sir,” said Michael. “ Well, my dear uncle,” said Esther, “ I must clear myself of extravagance; the truth is, we found it very difficult to have any command over the morals of those whom we only saw at in-

tervals, and Mr. Kemp has been a good deal distressed to find that our own outdoor servants are even more immoral than those of our neighbours, and we have now determined to board all the single men in our own house; of course, we shall give lower wages. We now have a check which they cannot resist; and as it has been reported that our servants corrupted the whole village; we now hope that their example may be useful, for we certainly have a very steady set." "I suppose, sir, you are aware," said Michael, "that our servants are looked at with a very jealous eye, and that a small fault in them is sure to be made much of. I do not believe half that was laid to their charge was true, but not having them under my own eye, I could not contradict it."

"Have you heard how the Jennings' are going on?" said Mr. Brownrigg; "I am told that the old man is really much to be pitied; and his children are really a great trouble to him, a parcel of idle vain young people, and the poor wife looks worn down with care. I could but examine her pale features as she sat before me the other Sunday, and she walked out of church like a neglected thing, not one arm in the whole party was extended to her."

Michael. I believe, sir, the old man is very much attached to her, so I have heard Betty Smith say. (*Brownrigg.*) “Is it so? Well, I am glad of it; surely the mother of such a family must need it—must deserve it. I think there are six grown up, and I heard there were more young sprouts at a distance.” (*Michael.*) “Yes, two or three at school.” (*Brownrigg.*) “Well, what is to become of such a family brought up as they are.” (*Michael.*) “I believe, sir, Mr. Jennings sees his error.” (*Brownrigg.*) “Yes, yes, it begins to pinch now, that’s the worst of it; we none of us see our errors till it is too late to amend them. For my own part, I cannot think what they propose to themselves. Why, don’t you know, sir, that half the world, half the London world, I mean, rise in the morning without knowing where they shall lie down at night; at least, so says one who is supposed to have studied human nature well, ‘thrown as it were upon existence by those whose irregular lives had plunged them into misery, without money, without friends, without education, with keen appetites, and strong passions; is it wonderful that vice and immorality should spread?’ But these things are mending, sir; the schools and the societies will certainly do great things.” “And yet, my dear

uncle," said Esther, "how they are opposed, how many ill-natured things are said about those who are exerting themselves most strenuously." "Why, my dear, it is much easier to find fault than to imitate, and if I like to be easy and quiet, and think of no one but myself, and some kind-hearted neighbour comes forward, and is endeavouring to do good to all around him, comparisons are made to my disadvantage, so that all I have for it is to pull down his fair name, and make out that he is doing nothing at all, or more than nothing, mischief."

Michael smiled; there was so much truth in the observation, that from that moment he entertained hopes of the candid open-hearted Brownrigg.

But we must visit our old friends at P., we must enquire after the first friends of Michael, whom we left in rather delicate health. Job said, "I would not live away;" and many a delicate sufferer since has breathed language not dissimilar. And what do we learn when we see these pillars of the earth trembling, and the strong bowed down. We learn, that the word of the Lord abideth for ever; we are there told, that whether there be tongues they shall cease, and whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away; nevertheless

we have a sure word of testimony. But how the heart of Michael was wounded, and all within him was melted, when he was told his excellent friend was fast sinking in the valley. Never had his faith been so tried, or any event touched him so nearly; he was ready to say, "And I, whither can I go?" and he felt that he was wrong, that he had been making man his stay; and poor Esther could say little to comfort him, for she knew from universal testimony the worth of him whom he trembled to lose. The disorder, under which his excellent friend laboured, was not one which pulls down the pillars of the body at once, but gradually saps the foundation till the strong man yields. There were many ebbings and flowings—he was now a little better, and now again he drooped; and the eyes that derived light and brilliancy from his eye were often so suffused with tears, that they sought where to weep. How needful is it for the Christian to live in the habitual conviction, "he doeth all things well;" for however God may be pleased to listen to the prayer of his people to soften the pang of departure, and to permit faith to support us in that trying hour, he does not alter the chain of his providences, but he gives strength to bear whatever he is pleased to inflict. The spoiler

is in the world, and sin hath tainted all ; and the bare idea, that we could not stand in his sight if he were to mark one sin of a thousand, should bend the haughty brow, and silence all reply ; but “ God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Thus would Mr. Walker argue with his beloved wife, as she sat by the side of his sofa ; she would sometimes say, “ My love, I cannot give you up, I cannot feel resignation, and what is more, I cannot ask for it. I seem afraid of having my desires granted, and my treasure removed, and poor dear Sophy feels just as I do.” The sufferer smiled on her faintly, “ that is to say, my dear, that you are both rebels ; and that, instead of supporting me in my weakness, you would bow me to earth again with your love and tenderness. Alas ! you know not how I need you to encourage me, and how dark the path has been through which I have travelled lately ; I can say, that this hath been my prayer, ‘ Lord, grant that I, who have preached to others, may not myself be cast away.’ ” “ Oh, my love, can you doubt for a moment of your safety.” — “ My dear wife, I am very weak, and the enemy hath been very busy with me. He suggests very truly ‘ what have you suffered for your God ? what have you endured ? Son, remember that

thou, in thy life time, receivedst thy good things.' This text hath been a great affliction to me."

Mrs. Walker almost smiled in scorn as she said, "Get thee behind me, Satan? what have you suffered, indeed? The *laws* of the land have *protected* you. But have you not suffered the *cold look*, the *averted eye*, the *insolent sneer*, from your brother clergy? Have I not heard you say, that that proud Doctor, who shall be nameless, would scarcely return your bow; and at the visitation dinner, when your bishop looked at you with kindness, and drank your health, this *insolent* man *stared* at you as though he were *astonished* that your superior should notice you. And what was all this for, my love, but that you *faithfully* preached that Gospel which was committed to you by him who shall ere long say to you, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"

This good lady was fired with what she was saying, and her eye was lit up with unusual brilliance. Her husband smiled on her—"Why, this goes well, Sophia. I shall have your arm to the river's brink." This little speech sunk Mrs. Walker's ardour again, and he heard her faintly arti-

culate, "If it be thy will, let this cup pass from me."

About this time it had been purposed that Sophia should give her hand to Protheroe, who was coming down; but she wrote to him, entreating him to wave the subject for the present. "My dear friend," said she, "my heart is too heavy, the shadows of the valley are thickening fast around me; and though my body is in perfect health, my spirit has long seemed hovering on the brink of the grave. Could you see the melting weakness of my dearest father, you would feel with me, that it is next to impossible to smile in his presence; and I should feel it to be a poor return for all your affection to give you my hand with an averted eye, and a heart bursting with sorrow. No, my dear friend, I should think it was going against the will of Providence; 'there is a time for all things,' said the wisest of men, and surely this is a time to weep, not to rejoice. My dear mother too is so afflicted, that it would be cruelty to leave her while she is struggling in the midst of her grief for a smile; and, alas! how often in vain. No, my dearest friend, come and see us, it will cheer my father to look at you, for you know how he loves you; but speak not of

taking me away. I could not leave him, no, we must wait for happier seasons. I think you will agree with me, we seldom differ, and I feel assured you will well understand me."

Protheroe *did* understand her, he came down, but it was to visit his uncle—it was to watch by his side, to listen patiently to all his weakness, now to move the pillow, and now to relate something amusing—sometimes to become a listener, and to treasure from the lip of wisdom axioms of eternal moment; but never did he hint an expectation of the fulfilment of their promise, though the parting word at Christmas had been, "In May we shall see you;" and, as he pressed Sophia's hand, he said, "in May, remember;" but May returned, and we may truly say that neither Protheroe nor Sophia wished to accomplish that engagement. No, strange as it may seem, they were too much occupied by the decline of their aged friend to desire any thing but an alleviation of his sufferings.

As soon as Mr. Lascelles heard from Michael of the illness of this dear old friend, he was deeply interested; but when he heard of the state of his mind by a letter from his son, he said, "Oh, Mento-ria! who can tell but a little conversation

might cheer him; and though he is a father in Christ, and I a young man, who can tell but I may be enabled to say something, to speak some word of comfort; at any rate, I will try," and Robinson was immediately in attendance; and ere the close of that day, they set out on their journey. It was indeed a cheering prospect to our venerable sufferer to have Protheroe at the head of his sofa, and his kind friend Lascelles by his side, with his hand in his, breathing consolation, and repelling all the fiery darts of the enemy with the rich promises of the Scripture. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, you know well that every truth you have preached is from the sure word of testimony. Take unto you the whole armour, my dear friend, the sword of the Spirit, and above all, the helmet of salvation. Do not wonder that those whom you have taught and instructed seem stronger than yourself; we have a subtle enemy, he well knows that in raising doubts in your mind, he attacks a city upon a hill. He well knows, that in endeavouring to sap the foundation of your faith, he wounds through you many a weak believer."

Here Mr. Walker shuddered, and his wife, who was all tenderness, feared that

Mr. Lascelles was touching the wounded part too closely, and she looked at Sophia in her own quick manner; but she was soon relieved, for this judicious friend raising his voice, as was his manner when his subject deeply interested him, "But there are more with us than they which are against us; and lo, I am with you alway even to the end. Alas, my dear friend, we do know and feel that we are encompassed with infirmities, but we have an High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of them: but as the bent and inclination of your whole life bears testimony that you have first been seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, oh! suffer not these clouds to overshadow your peace."

Many conversations of this kind passed; nothing seemed permanently to comfort the sufferer, while the temptation of looking at himself and his evidences had force. But one morning, quite alone, while the house was totally still, and his dear faithful partner thought him asleep, he was revolving in his mind all the rich promises that are scattered up and down for the comfort of believers; and those words, "the rock that is higher than I," came over his mind with peculiar force and stability. It had long been his custom to follow and con-

nect the Scripture: thus, for instance, the word rock, "Moses smote that rock, and the water gushed out; the Israelites drank of that rock which followed them; that rock was Christ, the Rock of ages, of which Christ himself said, Whosoever falleth thereon shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder." And his prayer was, "Set my feet upon the rock, and order thou my goings."

In meditating thus for hours in the loneliness of a wakeful night, this good man found consolation; his disorder, though not in itself of a nervous kind, had weakened the nervous system, and he was sometimes convinced that his mental distresses arose from bodily weakness. "Surely," said he one day, "he who enabled Peter to walk upon the waters, as on a pavement of adamant; he who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, will be strength to my weakness; yea, he will uphold me in my weakness. And though I have lien among the pots, yet shall my soul be like a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold."

Thus supported by stable scripture consolations, carefully watched by his medical friend, and nursed by the hands of love, this dear man continued, though in much

weakness, to comfort his family by his presence.

It was one morning after a night thus spent, that they were all assembled in the library, and Mr. Lascelles saying that he must return either on the morrow or on the following day, that our reverend friend, with his hand in Protheroe's, and Sophia with her little work, now and then laying it down and looking upon him, he said, "I have a strange proposal to make; I am so poor a creature, that I cannot long expect to keep my wealth; and how often have I censured misers for holding their bags till the last moment. I was thinking," said he, "Sophia," turning to his wife, "of inviting a man to rob me;" then pausing for a minute, and seeing that surprise and wonder sat on the face of each, he said, "Perhaps it might be as well to give it away, at least it would be more creditable to me, and I would do it now while I have legal people about me." All this was said so calmly and so gravely, that there was only one person in the circle who understood him; and this quickness of apprehension arose from his eye glancing upon Sophia. At the word treasure she instantly conceived his meaning, for he had often pressed her hand, and used this expression. Protheroe was in that

sort of state hardly knowing where his eyes should rest; when his uncle spoke of legal men, he thought he meant himself; he fancied he was about to make his will, but he looked at Sophia, and he saw her face crimsoned with blushes, and he began to comprehend it. But here the dear sufferer raised himself slowly on his couch. "My dear friend," said he to Mr. Lascelles, "you know that this young man has long been my son, like the twin brother of my dear Edmund, and he has wished to bind himself by a closer tie, and to become a kind guardian to one, who it is needless to say, is *very dear* to me; and I had intended myself to join their hands, to pronounce the nuptial benediction; but it seems otherwise ordered. As you are now here, I have a proposal to make to marry them by special licence in my sick room, that my soul may bless them before I die." "Oh, my dear father!" said Sophia, "it must not, cannot be." Protheroe also rose, and said, "My dear Sir, at such a moment I do not, cannot wish it." "Softly, children," said the dear good man, "I am not going to part with Sophy; here she must abide, Protheroe; that's one of my stipulations; but I have settled it in my mind, unless you have altered your's, my good Protheroe." "Oh, my

dearest uncle!" and here he looked at Sophia, as though he would have said, ' *You know it is impossible.*'

There were difficulties attending the procuring of the special licence, and the time pressed; so it was at length determined they should go to church, and the ceremony should be again performed in the library, that the presence of the beloved father, might sanctify the scene. We may say, this was an affecting wedding, they rejoiced with trembling; Sophia and Protheroe were sincere Christians, and they both took the same view of the pathetic circumstances which hung over their union; they felt that they were eating of the Lord's passover with bitter herbs. Though it were to be wished that such seasons as these might be unclouded, yet, truly speaking, it is in harmony with the state of man, whose enjoyments and sorrows are so blended as truly to be called a chequered scene. The dear father felt this, and more than ever exerted himself to dispel that cloud which he knew his own sickness occasioned; and when they returned from church, they found him, with every thing around him, so arranged under his own direction, that but for his pallid hue and recumbent posture, one might have thought him well. And when he

joined their hands, his countenance wore such an air of tender interest as he said, "the Lord bless you," that even Mr. Lascelles shed tears.

Jane Kemp, who so far partook of the family character as to do most things well, came curtsying respectfully, and walking up to her mistress, as though she bore happy tidings, in a half whisper, said, "My brother Michael is come, ma'am." Mr. Lascelles caught the sound of the word Michael, and began to fear that something painful had occurred, in which he was concerned, and was greatly relieved when he heard her say, "Ma'am, my brother had such a desire to see master;" and Mr. Walker looking at his wife, said, "what is that, love?" "Our old friend. the blackberry gatherer," said Edmund, looking at Protheroe. "Well, this is pleasant," said one, "this is pleasant," said another, and he was welcomed by all from the heart. "Let us see him," said Mr. Walker. "As soon as he has taken some refreshment, take care of him, Jane;" and the bride rose and cut him a slice of cake. "It seems but the other day, Sophy," said Edmund, "that you and I were at Fanny Kemp's wedding, and here we are now at your's, my dear." Protheroe, who stood leaning over the back of Sophia's chair,

said, "And when are we to come to your's, Edmund?" "That I cannot say, I shall be very particular." A simper ran through the circle as he said this, and Mr. Lascelles looked on him with an enquiring eye. Edmund, who was not aware he was listened to by any but Protheroe and Sophy, looked a little put out by the general notice, and seemed to shrink into himself for a moment. "'Tis a very important change," said Mr. Lascelles, "and I blame no man for being particular, the colour of his life here, and it may be that which is to come depends upon it." Dear Mr. Walker, whose patient attention had been unbroken during the whole of this little converse, said, in soliloquy, "Ah! most true! most true!—What do we not owe to it?" and then looking at his wife, "Ah, Sophy, you know how in the early part of our union your kind hints were axioms, and your influence my guiding star; and all this," looking at Mr. Lascelles, "without any assumption of consequence." During this sweet compliment, the eye of Protheroe rested on Sophia, for he thought it highly probable that he should receive the same kind support from her principles which her father had received from her mother's: it is true, he had had a very different education, but then he was

greatly exposed in London. The society with which he chiefly mixed were men of talent, close reasoners, and popular men not wanting in a good opinion of themselves; standing high in public esteem, it was in this mirror they regarded their own characters; and though Protheroe was a different man, it is well known we are apt to take the colour of our converse from those among whom we mix; and a sort of consciousness hung over this good young man in his occasional visits to P——, as though it were a different atmosphere. It was all the language of the eye which he spoke now, and as we are privileged to read what passes in the heart, we will just inform our readers that he thought, “never shall the pride of masculine talent close my ear to the gentle whispers of feminine counsel. No, my sweet Sophy, I feel assured *you* will never improperly usurp; and far be it from me to shun so *gentle* a monitor.” It may be necessary to explain in what way Mrs. Walker *could* counsel her husband.

Mr. Walker was the son of a very upright curate of a neighbouring parish, very much respected by all the neighbouring clergy; and the more so, as he did not go *too* far in religion. He brought up his three children with the strictest attention to economy, and transmitted his patrimony

to them untouched. All this was excellent in its place, and we may say of him, that he *shone*, but he did not *burn*; his religion had the *outward polish*, but it wanted the *inward warmth*; and while Mrs. Walker's father, with an *ample* fortune, could scarcely obtain *common* civility, old Walker was cited and admired by all his neighbours: and wherefore? simply for this reason: he called himself a high churchman. He acknowledged in the confession, that he had gone astray like a lost sheep; he read in the Lessons, that he must be born again, or he could not enter the kingdom of heaven; he prayed also, that God would not take his holy Spirit from him or his congregation.

He also read, that God gives his holy Spirit to them that ask it. In the ordination service he had joined in the prayer, for immediate influence; had paused with his fellow candidates for orders, as though they expected the blessing they sought; and yet, gentle reader, after all this, he would deny the influences of the Spirit, and despise the saints, as he called them, who *pretended* to expect it. Wonder not, reader, when you hear such a man called a high churchman: he was high, it is true, in his own opinion, and had it not been that his son's choice was a wealthy choice,

he would have made stout opposition to his union with Mrs. Walker. Wonder not that Mr. Walker's prejudices should yield, he is not the only man who has found some charm in seventeen thousand pounds, which was the sum paid with his young daughter. Not that Walker was mercenary, far from it; he was really liberal beyond his means, but then the idea of close union with persons whose principles he affected to despise, was to him no small sacrifice; they had nothing in common. Walker was a keen sportsman, Nugent thought it incompatible with the clerical character. Walker thought, if he preached a sermon on Sunday, visited the sick when they sent for him, and performed all the outward duties of the ministerial character, he had done sufficient, and might thank God that "he was not as other men were." Nugent was never satisfied with himself, but lived in the spirit of that text, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Yet, think not that the one was gloomy, or the other particularly happy; no, there was a craving ambition about Walker, while the humility of Nugent led him to a safe and happy dependence on a Saviour.

Young Walker saw enough of the composure and peace of Mr. Nugent's character to *respect* his principles, if he did not

at first adopt them; and Sophia Nugent was so convinced of the enquiring mind of her friend, that she had no fear, if once he saw light that he should close his eyes in darkness. Many a sweet lecture did he receive as they walked up and down the broad avenue that led to her father's house, with the Bible in her hand, and prayer in her heart; she would sweetly endeavour to persuade him, whom much she loved, that the outward forms were nothing without the inward spiritual grace, and that the death unto sin must be accompanied by a new birth unto righteousness.

I have been thus explicit, to clear this excellent person from an imputation which might naturally attach to her character. No; be assured she yielded the palm most cheerfully, and was delighted to see how rapidly conviction and conversion went hand in hand with him to whom she had given her heart. This has been a long digression, but Mrs. Walker, thus honoured and beloved by her husband, had as often sought his arm for strength, and yielded the needful support when her excellent husband required it at her hand. And now, in this lingering weakness, she was most consoling when all within, saving his trust in a Saviour, trembled to the centre. She was more valued, more beloved,

than even in those days when he led her to the altar, as his dear and happy bride.

Mr. Lascelles was obliged to return home, and Protheroe also; but Sophia remained while her father's weakness required her presence. But we must attend to the hero of our story.

The reader has heard that the domestic economy of the Brow was changed, and the number of in-door servants increased; and that it arose from the circumstance of the unkind reports respecting them. There were many families in the village who envied Michael, and Jem Brown, who retained his old affection for him, and his especial anxiety that, as a religious character, all should go well beneath his roof, never failed to bring every report that could at all touch Michael's reputation. Now, though many of the servants at the Rectory were very worthy, and most of them religious characters, yet there was one gossiping girl whom Mrs. Lascelles had taken from Farmer Jennings as dairy-maid: she had been occasionally elevated to the post of waiting-maid to the Miss Jennings, and had inherited some of their cast-off finery, and much of their spirit; and having gathered from the tattle of her young ladies that Mr. Kemp was a sort of Methodist, and knowing that Jem was his

friend, at the same time finding all her smartness lost on the young gardener, she turned her partiality into dislike, and lost no opportunity of teasing him. She would frequently say, “for her part she had not tasted a good bit of vegetables since she left Sizors, and she did believe that the best of the things went up to the Brow.”

Jem had borne a good deal from her in a very Christian spirit; but when she said this, he only waited till the old gardener came in to take it up seriously. “Andrews,” said Jem, “here’s sad goings on between you and I; Sukey’s upright mind cannot bear it.” The old man sat smoking his pipe in the corner, and as he stopped it, he looked up at Jem with an enquiring eye, “And well, what now?” The dairy-maid was working, and cook sat by; and Robinson, Jem’s first friend, was pacing up and down, talking of foreign parts that he had seen with his master. “What now?” *Jem.* “Why, nothing more nor less than this, that I carry the best vegetables out of the garden up to my friends at the Brow Farm.” “Pooh,” said the old man, “never mind that. An honest conscience, boy, will carry us through more than that.” Sukey sat swelling and colouring, and working amazingly quick; and Robinson turning round short, taking

the snuffers in his hand, snuffed the candle, at which the women sat working. "If," said he, and he looked steadily at Sukey, "if the conscience of the accused party may carry them safely through, what is to become of the accuser. I cannot think that such charges ought to be passed over silently; it is not safe to live among those who bring false accusations; I may be charged with wearing my master's clothes; cook with giving away victuals without leave; no man is safe where there are false accusers." All this time Sukey kept reddening, till at last her passion became too much for her, and she said, "she hoped people might be allowed to speak of what they see'd with their own eyes." At this poor old Andrews could sit no longer, but putting his hand upon the shoulder of the accusing party, said, "Whatever you have seen, Susan, I charge you speak." After some conflict with her pride in doing even mischief when she was desired to do it, she said, "Why, hav'n't I seen the frail baskets as belongs to master fetched by that William from the Brow full of things? and hav'n't I seen you, James Brown, many's the time with the flowers and the fruit going yourself?" "Never," said James, "but by my master's order." "And what does

that little carter's boy do here, two or three times every week hanging about the garden door? Do you think, as I can't see?" "First," said Andrews, "for William with the frail baskets, your master is very fond of lettuce." "He don't see much of it," said the pert dairy-maid. Andrews went on. "Your master is very fond of lettuce, I say, and the snails have been very busy in our garden this year; they ate out the very heart of almost all we had. Well, master went up to the Brow, and there he saw some very fine ones growing on the open ground before any of our neighbours had them. Mr. Kemp was quite glad that he had any thing that could be of any use to master, and he begged Jem to come whenever he liked to have them: and ever since that time in our master's own basket, Sukey;" and he looked at her very archly; "we have been fetching away Mr. Kemp's lettuces; and if we did not fetch them, Mr. Kemp's own man was sure to come very kindly down to bring them; and then, as for the little carter's boy, he has brought us manure for the hot-bed whenever we wanted it. So you see your master is greatly injured by Mr. Kemp, Jem Brown, and old Andrews; and if you injure him as much in the dairy as we do in the gar-

den, I know not what will become of him." And here Andrews lit a fresh pipe, and began to smoke; but Sukey was not to be silenced so easily. She said, "It was well known, that with all their religion, Mr. Kemp's servants were oftener at the public than any; and as for Sunday, why they did not mind it a bit, and that the best of them were always going of errands with dinnerings and supperings to Mr. Kemp's new relations. For her part, she had it from the best authority from them as was sent with them, as was'n't mighty fond of going neither, them as thought they had enough to do all the week, and might have a bit of rest on the Sunday."

Now, though these charges were very difficult to make out, and really led to nothing seriously wrong, it had this effect upon Michael's and upon Esther's mind, "we will take our servants into the house, watch over their conduct, and endeavour to make friends of them." This small link in the chain of Providence led to very important results at the Brow: they altered the whole plan of their establishment, and had only four out-door servants besides stone pickers; and as the reader may take some interest in the internal management of such very old friends, we will describe their plans

for the good of their family. They had sufficient employment for one dairy-maid, and as her business required her to rise very early, she was permitted to go to rest as soon as she wished. This dairy-maid was Rose Meredith, who was just going out in that capacity when the changes took place at the Brow; and Betty Smith, who had an interest in all that passed at the Brow, undertook to initiate this young dairy-maid in all the mysteries of cheese-making; and Rose, who was exceedingly pleased with her new situation, promised fair to become all that Stephen wished her. But as we think it may be useful to repeat the advice she received from her brother on her entrance here, we shall give it a place.

“ My dear Rose, I have been Mr. Kemp’s servant myself, and I know what a kind master he is; and as for your mistress, so great is her gentleness, that I only fear she will be too kind to you. Now, Rose, I have seen something of servants and masters, and I am sorry to say, that I have generally found that the sharpest masters are best served, and gentleness too often abused. But, Rose, do not disgrace me, and make me unhappy; you know what a friend Mr. Kemp has been to me; you know how it

would grieve your sister Fanny, if you were to do any thing wrong. I am not afraid of your being dishonest, my dear Rose, or of your making away with your master's property; but what I fear for you is, that you might give a sharp answer to Mrs. Smith."

Now, says the reader, who is Mrs. Smith?—Since the marriage of Michael, and the changes in the domestic establishment, it was thought right both by Esther and Michael to have this mark of respect shown, and a difference put between her and the other servants. But to return. "Remember, my dear," said Stephen, "that we have all our path of duty in this world; and even if one person goes out of that path, and consequently is unkind to me, or makes me uncomfortable, it does not follow that I am to be unkind to them, and make them uncomfortable. What says the Bible: 'Render to all their dues; recompense to no man evil for evil.' Now all this, my dear sister, is the advice which Mr. Kemp gave me when I lived at the Valley; I had some very cross fellow-servants, and he was continually warning me to have patience with them, and never to trouble my mistress with any complaints; and my having patience with them, made them have patience with me, and at last I got such a habit of speaking

kindly, that I had no difficulty in it, and before I left the Valley, I may say there was nothing but peace in it."

Rose promised every thing, and behaved so very well to Betty Smith, that we may say this good creature had a daughter in Rose Meredith; and for her mistress, it was more the name than any thing else, for she was so aware of Betty's excellence and good management, that she was continually seeking her advice. There was one stranger in the female establishment, this was Ann Medway. Now Nanny, as she was called, came out of Devonshire: she was a cleanly creature and very upright, had a great horror of Methodists, as she called them, and sincerely believed, that if any one spoke religiously on a week day, that it was all hypocrisy, and had she had any money in them, would have looked sharp to her pockets. Now this girl's place was more about the parlour, and she saw more of her mistress than Rose, and all she witnessed was so kind, so gentle and benevolent, that she must have had a heart of stone not to have regarded her with affection. But we must mention the astonishment which she felt, and expressed on the first evening of her arrival at the Brow, when she saw the servants all collected in the hall, and walking

towards the great parlour at the sound of the evening prayer bell. "What are they going to do?" said she to Rose; "what is it all about?" "We are going to prayers," said Rose. "To prayer! what, is your master a Methodist preacher?" "Dear me, no," said Rose, "but master has prayers every night and every morning." Nanny thought to herself, "this will never do for me; I hate such over godly doings, I never saw any good come of it." This she muttered to herself while they were seating. It was Michael's custom, when there were any new comers, to explain in some degree his views and plans for their benefit; and he had one kind expression, that was likely to soften every heart: "I consider that I have another child added to my care, another soul to answer for. Our duties are the same, I to take care of your interest, you to take care of mine; but unless our good God is pleased to help us in both, we shall sadly fail; we do not want directions. This revealed will of God points the duties both of masters and servants, and by it we shall be judged at that day when we must all give account for the deeds done in the body. Now, observe me, I do not mean to say that we shall be saved for being good masters or good ser-

vants, but our Lord teaches us, that ‘a tree is known by *its fruits*,’ and that ‘men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles,’ but that ‘we are known by *our fruits*,’ and that ‘if we love him, we shall keep his commandments.’”

Long did this pharasaical girl resist instruction, long did she throw out hints about “people preaching as had’n’t been to the Varsity;” frequently would she say, “if her poor father could have lived to have seen her in a Methodist’s house, it would have broke his heart: he hated them worse than poison.” “I think,” said Rose, “you had better go; I am sure, if master knew what you said, I do not think he would keep you.” “Oh, as for that, I shall stay my time, and bear it as long as I can: I am sure I have much ado to keep my countenance of a morning, there you all sit of a row gaping, with your noses up in the air like little pigs in a high wind, just as if you were afraid to lose a word on’t.” Rose had a high spirit, and was exceedingly fond of her master; and replied, “I am afraid to lose a word of it, for it is all good and all meant so kindly to us; the least we can do is to listen to it.” “Well, you’re very welcome if you like it,” said the impenetrable Nanny, “for my part, I had rather be about my work

any day; I am no hypocrite." "That is not so clear," said Rose, "that must be proved; it is not because you say so, that I am bound to believe it."

Here words rose so high that Betty Smith overheard, and came in to know what was the matter. Rose was not a girl to stir up mischief, far from it, therefore she only replied, that she and Nanny could not quite agree; and Betty, who loved peace at her heart, left them to make it out. "I have one thing to desire of you, Nanny," said Rose, "that as long as we live together, you never talk to me about your master and mistress, for I shan't stay to hear it." "I am sure you can't say as ever I said a word against Mrs., I likes her uncommon; and bepities her too."—"Bepity! what do you bepity her for?" "What for? because she never has a bit of pleasure, week in and week out." "I believe, if you were to ask Mrs., she would say she had nothing but pleasure all day long; I came here before you, and I never seed Mrs. but what she was always contented." "Ah! I dare say;" and away she went.

That every thing might go on in regular train, Friday was the day fixed on by Esther for washing up every thing dirty, and by these means the domestic economy suf-

ferred no break. Saturday morning the house-maid sat down with her mistress in the quiet little parlour to repair whatever needed reparation. It was in these moments that Esther ventured to give Nanny a little advice, not that she knew any thing of what had passed between Rose and the house-maid, but she had observed particularly during grace at dinner, an impatience in the girl's manner as though this short invocation were too much for her; she began thus: "You come from Devonshire, Nanny?" "Yes, ma'am." "Very beautiful country." "Oh yes, ma'am;" and here the girl ran out in praises of her county: "she had never seen any thing like it, she didn't expect to see any thing like it again." "It is very natural you should love it; I used to be very fond of Worcestershire, I lived there when I was a child. Tis very strange, Nanny, that as we are so fond of all we knew when we were little children, and that chiefly because we were with kind friends who loved us, and gave us all we wanted; it is very strange that we should not love HIM more who provides all needful for us, even to the present moment." Here Nanny said, "Who is that, ma'am?" There was great good sense about Esther, and there was also great good temper, which is not al-

ways found to go hand in hand. She did not burst out with saying, "Dear me, what, don't you know? I thought every child knew that." But she lifted her heart to God, and prayed that he would give her wisdom to instruct the ignorant. She said, "Who gave you life, Nanny?" Nanny stared, for she found there was something of religion coming in. "Who keeps you in health, my good girl? Who preserved you when you had that dreadful malignant fever?" Here Nanny said, that "they had as good a doctor as any in the county, and he never charged them a farthing." Esther was exceedingly struck with this effort of Nanny's to thank any second cause rather than her God; but she still preserved her temper, and went on. "And who do you think, Nanny, preserved your good friend the doctor from catching this disorder, and so enabling him to attend you?" "Oh, as for that, ma'am, I am sure I don't know: I always see'd him with plenty of vinegar on his pocket handkerchief, and I know he took all possible care."

Esther saw there was perverseness in it, so she said, "You have been sadly neglected, my poor child; I do not think there is a Sunday scholar in this village but knows more than you appear to do. Have

you ever read your Bible?" "No, ma'am, not through, and I could not understand what I did read." "Now, Nanny, the same kind Friend whom you will not acknowledge, or thank, or love, that Friend who formed you, and gave you good parents, while neighbouring children were left dirty and neglected—" "Why, la, ma'am, how could you know that? how could you know that James Dummer's children, who lived close by, were so dirty and ragged, that my mother would never let me play with them?" This came out so suddenly, that Esther could hardly help smiling, and only recovered in time to reply, that she really did not know that circumstance, but she well knew that every good and perfect gift cometh from above; every advantage we enjoy, every blessing we share, all, all is His good gift. "Tell me, Nanny, could you make one blade of corn? Every common vegetable you eat, the very air you draw, might be pestilential but for his goodness. Is it too much to thank him, Nanny? is it too much to love him?" "Oh no, ma'am, but I never thought about it." "That is exactly what our great and good God says, 'My people do not consider.' I have often thought of these words, Nanny, when I have seen the cattle following their feeder, 'the ox know-

eth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.'"

Nanny was struck with this: she had never remembered such a text as this, but still she was not subdued, and she observed "what a power of time it would take if we were always to be thinking about religion." "My poor child," said Esther, "if we really did think of religion as we ought, it would be as natural as the air we breathe; and, oh! the peace that it gives the mind; those who hate it little know the solid enjoyment to have no fear of death, Nanny, to be satisfied that all is for the best, happen what may; and then for the temper, a Christian does not dare to make others unhappy, keeps a guard over his actions, his words, and even his thoughts; and if he falls into sin, (for who is it that liveth and sinneth not,) he is the first to be humbled under it, and can never rest till he has made his peace with those whom he has offended." All this went direct to Nanny's conscience; she knew that she had behaved very ill to Rose, and yet she had carried it off with a very high hand; she had never even thought of making an apology, but looked at her with insufferable pride, and flounced about every time she came near her. She

thought to herself, “ If Christians must humble themselves, I am sure I am not one, for ’tis the last thing I should ever think of doing.” But she began to hope that all her mistress said was not gospel. Now, though I have said that Nanny was not subdued, yet there was a feeling of respect in her mind for which she could not account : her master and mistress did more for their servants than many squires and their ladies ; Nanny knew, by experience, that few farmers thought of nursing their servants when they were ill. “ Her poor brother would come home with a dreadful cold and cough by sleeping in his wet clothes ; it is true, his master paid his wages up till the time he was taken ill, and said, ‘ There, lad, there’s a shilling for you ; you have been an honest boy.’ But here, when William was ill, there was master up at his bed-side with messes ; and if Mrs. Smith’s finger did but ache, there was possets, and no one knows what, and Mrs. up and down after her as if she was a lady of the land. Certain they are uncommon kind people ;” and she settled it in her mind that it was a very good place for a servant to fall sick in. But what *but* could Nanny make ? Why, she said, it was the dullest harvest home she had ever seen. “ Why, they darn’t sing a song, except that old ditty,

‘ Were I a shepherd’s maid, to keep
On yonder hills a flock of sheep ;’

or,

‘ Ere around the huge oak that o’rshadows yon hill,
The fond ivy had learn’d to entwine ;’

or some such moral nonsense ; then Mrs. must have a hymn at the end, as if that were proper when people were making merry. No ; for her part she thought it was a dull house after all, she should try it a year ; she didn’t think it was well to be changing so often, and she thought mother would not like it ;” so she condescended to determine to bear with their religion and themselves a few months longer, upon the broad principle of her own convenience, not at all uncommon with selfish servants. But be it known to such, if any such should read “ Michael, the Married Man,” these children of the earth reap of the fruit of their own way ; and however a master or a mistress may do them good upon *principle*, they cannot feel the *attachment* that a generous Christian servant inspires.

There was another habit of this house, which did not quite suit Nanny’s taste : they all dined together ; Betty Smith took the bottom of the table, Esther took the top, and Michael sat on one side by her. They were very attentive and kind, fed

them very well, but still the restraint upon their mirth at meals was not at all agreeable to them. Michael would sometimes good-humouredly relate some innocent anecdotes that he had heard; and Brownrigg, who sometimes joined them at table, and who read the newspapers daily, had always something new to communicate. He was indeed a general favourite, and though he sometimes gave Nanny a quiet lesson when she came of an errand from the Brow, she could forgive it, because there was a drollery mixed with all he said and did. As, for instance: one day when she sat chattering in the kitchen to Peggy, after he had given her a message, he went in, and putting on her pattens, placed his hands comically before him, asking her if she had any more commands, for that he could not stop longer, as his mistress would wonder what he was about. Now though this reproof for her gossiping was felt, and well understood, the droll figure of this tall thin man in pattens so amused her, that no resentment was felt. If Peggy staid anywhere where Brownrigg sent her, he would go to the place, and tying his handkerchief round her wrist without uttering a single word, lead her quietly home. This happened once after she came into the country, and the nearness into which the

handkerchief brought Peggy to her master, caused a report that he was going to marry that young girl, as they appeared to be walking arm in arm; and the Miss Jennings were not displeased to have this little tale to amuse them, for indeed they were not always confined to such clear probabilities. But Peggy loved her master with very different feelings—the feeling of a child to a parent; and however disagreeable the situation in which he placed her, if she happened to do any thing he did not like, the anger was momentary, and the feeling of love and respect unshaken.

Peggy was an orphan, and was about to be sent to the workhouse, when one Monday evening she was brought up to the committee, before she was introduced; Brownrigg was one of the gentlemen who sat at the table, and the little creature, attracted by we know not what, but certainly it was providentially ordered, for Peggy laid her soft hand upon Brownrigg's as she hung by a poor neighbour's apron. The appeal thrilled through his veins till it reached the heart; and the light brown curls which shaded her open brow, and the fine dark tint of her infant eye, we must own had something to do with it; for Brownrigg was an admirer of beauty, and the pale hue that was stealing over her

features from poverty and neglect, all determined him. So he said, "No, gentlemen, we will not enter her;" and, taking the pen, he wrote a direction to Mrs. Tucker, and desired the woman to leave the child there. Now, though this neighbour was poor, she had a feeling for the infant; she had stood by the death-bed of its father and of its mother, and she said, "She hoped she might be allowed to come and see her sometimes; for," says she, "Sir, if I had had a bit of bread to give it, I would not have brought it here; but I have got three hungry babies of my own, and no hands but these to work for them." Brownrigg assured her, call when she might, she should always see her. So Margaret Fergerson was placed in the care of Mrs. Tucker till she was old enough for household work, and then her kind protector received her; and we can say, that no father ever watched over a darling child with more jealous care than Brownrigg over Peggy. And she well repaid him, for never did she resist his will in any way, but always bore in mind what Mrs. Tucker had impressed upon her, that he had rescued her from mixing with all the common persons who are admitted to a parish workhouse, that he supplied every needful want, and never said, "Peggy, you are

obliged to me," but carefully noted whatever she did that was pleasing; and his praise was combined in four words, "That's my good Peggy," words which distilled and dropped upon her young heart, and were a sufficient reward for any exertion; and he was very particular about whom she associated with. If he saw her getting intimate with any one whom he did not quite approve, he would say, "Tell me your company, and I will tell you who you are;" and this was one reason why he always shortened Nanny's visits. If Rose came, he would good-naturedly tell her he was glad to see her—she was rightly named—and sometimes beg she would always wear the red rose. In short, he had always some merry little speech for *her*; and one day went so far as to walk to the Brow to invite her, with the leave of her good master and mistress, and left some of his best tea for her, and went out himself, that the girls might enjoy themselves. He often glanced at a hope, that one day his sisters would come and dwell with him, but he fixed no time; and as these good women had lived so long and so comfortably together, though they determined never to resist his will, they were equally resolved not to hasten a removal. So month after month stole on, and no

change took place in their domestic plans, and he was so amused with wandering from one house to another, that he began to be as happy in his country as he had been in his town residence.

It is not our intention to weary the reader with all the minutiae of every-day life—we will merely touch a few points in their present state, and then pass over a few years, and view these young voyagers at a more advanced period.

One of Michael's plans for the happiness of his young family, as dictated by good sense and good nature, we will just glance at. He was quite firm in his resolves against pleasuring on a Sunday, as it was called, and he never allowed them even to go home on *that* day, unless *illness* or a visit from some *distant* friend seemed to render it indispensable; but then he took great care to employ them profitably: those who could read well taught at the adult school, beginners went to the infant school, and there was a secret understanding between Michael and the heads of those establishments; so that he was sure to be informed if there was any gossiping or trifling on the part of his family. Ann Medway was soon discovered to be an errant gossip, and of very little use at the Sunday school, so that from that time

Esther took her with her to visit the sick, while the others were at the schools. She was not informed of the reason, the thing was done, she knew not why ; what was at first unpleasant gradually interested her, to look on an old man whom they had assisted to read the Bible, &c. ; an infant, whose dimple countenance was lit up with smiles, while it repeated its Sunday hymn. These legitimate sources of pleasure left a harmless glow upon the mind, and they began to wonder how they could be so happy under restraints which had at first been so unpleasing to them ; and we must say, that Nanny was really happy to carry a slice of meat to a sick man whom she had attended, and who was sufficiently recovered to partake of it.

As these laws of confinement to the Brow on a Sunday were unchangeable, Michael gave them Tuesday in case they had occasion to go out. I do not mean to say that they went out every Tuesday, but this was the day on which they were allowed to see their friends. At first it occasioned great resistance ; but when it was found to be a fixed principle they became reconciled, and even liked it better, such attention was paid to their comfort in every way, they were so well and plentifully fed ; Michael helped them with such kindness at

table, every thing provided was so clean and good, and such care taken that there should be no waste, that it may be truly said they lived in the spirit of that text, “Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God.”

It pleased Providence to bless Michael, in the first four years of his marriage, with three infants: there was no want of kind nurses, no children had so many grandmothers; for besides Mary Humphries and Mary Kemp, there was Mrs. Beal, and Betty Smith pressing the young strangers to their bosoms. But Michael was called to resign, as well as to enjoy; for just as his eldest boy began to lisp his father's and mother's name, he was carried off by a sudden attack supposed to arise from the teeth. This boy, whose name was James, in honour of his late master, was laid in the ground with many tears; but we may truly say they were not rebellious tears, for a spirit of resignation pervaded the mind of each parent, though all the infantine endearments returned upon them with increased force, when they strove most to say, “Thy will be done.”

Poor Brownrigg alone would have it that the child was a delicate child, and in too sharp an air, and if he might have had it in his own little cottage, well sheltered

by the surrounding hills, it might have been alive and prattling at his knees; and Margaret was perpetually saying, "My dear, do not say this to Esther, it is her only comfort to think that every thing has been done that could be done. Alas! my dear," said the good old woman, "we must all go at some time, and who can tell but that God took him in great mercy." "No doubt," was her brother's reply; "but yet I should like to have done what could have been done. I have no right to put my fingers in the fire to try if they will burn." The second child was a girl, and was named Jemima at the particular desire of Mrs. Finch, who stood for it with her daughter; and as she thought, from the principles of the parents, they would never buy it any thing very handsome, she insisted on always buying it pelisses and bonnets, which were accepted gratefully, only with this promise, that it should not be too costly.

"Pray, madam, remember," said Michael, "when you are bestowing your gifts on this dear child, you are clothing the infant of your brother's stable-boy?" "I will do all as you would like to have it done," was the reply, "but I remember that I am clothing the child of one of the best men I know, Mr. Kemp, one who has

paid me for many years voluntarily a sum which he had no right to pay ; be you the guide of my son, and all I can do for your child is too little." " Dear kind friend, madam, you have always been to me, and I am sure your son will not need any one to guide him, for his own principles appear correct and excellent." " Ah!" said Mrs. Finch, smiling, " you and Jemima have managed him your own way ; but no matter, he is a good boy, only rather strict, and hardly thinks his mother can go to heaven." " Ah, dear madam, there is but one way for us all." " Well, well," said Mrs. Finch, " I hope we shall all meet at last, Mr. Kemp, but no matter which road we take, you know." This was spoken rather too quickly, and it went to Michael's heart ; and he replied with much solemnity, " There is no other name under heaven whereby we may be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ." This closed the converse for that season.

Now, in the guidance of these two infants, Jemima and Moss, for that was the name of the youngest boy, Michael was determined to begin from the beginning, and though he was surrounded by many who respected his principles, and joined with him, yet they thought that he was beginning too soon. What could such young infants know?

But this Christian father was immoveable—his children *should* be trained in the way they should go, that was his part—that he would perform—he left the rest with him whose promise never fails. Any thing like petulance was met with a very grave countenance, and if a sturdy resolution to have its own way appeared, it was seated safely and quietly, but never yielded to. Those who at first thought “he is a young father, we shall soon see; these fine new ways can’t come to much;” even these were convinced, and ended with saying, “I could not have thought a child could have so much sense, they be uncommon children, just like the father and mother.” And one day, when this was said in Mrs. Kemp, his mother’s hearing, she said, “Not a bit like our Michael; for when he was a child, there never was a more obstinate untoward boy.” Michael laughed. “Do you remember about your little kite when you was only four years old?” “Yes indeed, mother, I do.” “What was that?” said Esther, laughing. “Why,” replied his mother, “he had a little kite made for him by his father, in imitation of one which pleased him very much: it had a fine red star upon it, and Michael wanted to have a red star, but his father had given him a blue star, and endeavoured to persuade

him it would do quite as well. But it was 'No, no, that would not do;' so he went to bed very much out of temper because of the red star; and in the morning, when it was just light, the sturdy little rebel was seated on the ground with his little knife in his hand, pulling off the blue star." From that time it was a constant joke with Esther: when the children were obstinate, she would whisper, "My love, remember the blue star." And Michael would reply, "Yes, I know what stuff they come of, we shall have blue stars and green stars too, if we don't take care." Nevertheless, this dear young couple drew together very happily, and when this good young woman ever differed in opinion from her husband, she never forgot that the husband was the head of the house, even as Christ is the head of the church.

However people may laugh at the strictness of the Bible Christians, only let them enter the house of one under these principles; let them dwell there for a short season, and they shall see these sweet principles flowing like a river, and giving birth to all that is pure and excellent; they shall feel the calm of such a house, and own that none but He who made the heart could thus frame laws to regulate every action, and give peace to every

bosom. Yes, reader, I am persuaded, that were the word of God the standard of any one's actions, earth would be converted to heaven ; with only this exception, that *here* this mortal must bow, *there* shall be no more change. Dear Fanny and Stephen, who had often laughed at Michael's bachelor's management, were convinced that he was right, and took many a silent lesson for the training of their own infants, as they watched the silent progress of this wise father's plans ; but Fanny, we must own it, though now a mother of four, had still something of playful gaiety left, and she could not help giving the dear children some indulgences when they came to her house, which were denied at the Brow, such as sitting up to the tea-table, and putting the spoon into the brown sugar basin, and so sweetening the sweet in all the wild revel of infantine excess.

It chanced one day, that Michael came in the midst of one of these visits ; the sop was made in the saucer, and the sugar was spread at the top, and the little fat hand was going again ; the father stood quietly by for a minute, then putting his arm over Jemima's shoulder, he took up the little mess, and having tasted it, put his babe on his arm, and said, " My little

Jem, (which was the abbreviation given this infant,) do you mean to eat all that mess? if you do, when you go home your father must give you one cup of camomile tea." Poor Jemima had often tasted this beverage, which was a favourite remedy of her father's, and which he always administered himself; because, kind as the mother was, she could not give medicine—they were sure to conquer some way, and put by the nauseous draught. Little Jem allowed her mess to be lowered in sweetness, and very happily finished her tea on the knee of her father—as happily as though she had been suffered to satisfy her little palate to the utmost. But it was not all over, for Michael took his naughty Fanny aside, saying, "It is not kind of you, my dear, my precious Fanny, to make the necessary restraints of home disagreeable to these children."

Fanny had never viewed it in that light, but had considered every gratification she could bestow on these young things as proof of her love to their parents; but she was a persuadeable creature, and had such a veneration for Michael, that when she saw he was really in earnest, she never contended; but uncle Brownrigg was not so manageable, he would please the pretty brats, as he called them in his own

way ; so the drawers of his desk were opened and pulled about, and not unfrequently the contents scattered on the floor. This habit was so very bad, that Esther was obliged to remonstrate, and the little girl found a new amusement, less mischievous, in brushing uncle Brownrigg's hat, which she did till there was scarcely a morsel of beaver on one part ; this taught a lesson, and before these young culprits came, there was generally some ingenious contrivance to amuse them without destroying any of the property of uncle Brownrigg. It may be truly said, that the difficulty of training these young people arose from the indulgence of relatives, who would have done any thing to serve and profit them.

One afternoon, when they were all at tea together, (the father and mother, and the two infants,) at uncle Brownrigg's pretty cottage, the good man, well knowing that he must not give them the customary indulgences, began with a whistle. " Dear me, I wonder where the key of my desk is ; why, my little Jem, I have lost the key of my desk," and he winked at Esther as though he would have said, " that's only a deception." But Esther shook her head, for she perfectly understood him, and taking Jemima on her lap,

said, " My love, uncle Brownrigg would do any thing to make you happy, but he cannot have his house littered ; you know my little girl never litters at home—no, she folds up her mother's work and her little brother's pinafore ; she likes to be my little maid." " Yes, mother, yes, I do ;" and as soon as the children were gone from the room, Brownrigg said, " Now you will not persuade me that that child *likes* to put away." Esther knew by her uncle's manner, that he was not pleased, and it went to her heart to displease him in any way ; so she only said, " My dear Sir, I *endeavour* to make her like it." " Well, well, that's all very right, only there is no use in saying the child *likes* it."

Brownrigg, who always enjoyed a fling at the *very good* people, as he called them, continued. " That's not quite true, you know, to say she *likes* it." Michael, who had not ventured to speak hitherto, now said, " When I lived at P., Sir, it was Mr. Walker's habit to preach once a quarter to parents and children, and he took suitable texts, ' Train up a child in the way it should go ;' ' Children, obey your parents ;' and one observation which he made I have never forgotten, on ' train up a child in the way he should go.' It was ' Now

this relates not only to religious training, but the manner in which you bring up your children in your families, teach them to obey at the first word, train them in the habits of frugality and neatness, in habits of usefulness, train them in the habits of kindness to each other, and in active attention to all among whom they dwell. Now, though this teaching may be forgotten or rebelled against for a season, a good habit *cannot* be lost. *Cannot*, you will say; I reply, *cannot*. Hath not God promised us, that ‘when he is old, he shall not depart from it.’ I am so completely convinced of the blessing on good training, that I really do not believe a child morally and religiously trained, (observe what I say) with care, with great care, I do not believe that such a child can turn out ill; but then, you must not only bring them up at home, but keep them at home. Do not, after you have given a child an important lesson, turn it out into the street to play with those whose parents care not whether they go to heaven or hell. Shun bad company for your child, as carefully as for yourself; and one word more: I would say, do not indulge their appetites, never reward them by unusual indulgence, do not make them fancy there is happiness in excess, and when you give

them instruction, do not look very grave, as though all that is excellent were dull and disagreeable; no, let them feel what is most strictly true, 'that the man that feareth the Lord is blessed;' 'that the ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace.' But on the contrary, if (as it will surely happen) they commit *sin*, then let the gravity of your countenance evince your concern, especially for a lie; watch the slightest variation from truth, and never pass it by. The Scriptures abound in such awful denunciations against lying, that indeed it seems impossible for a good parent to excuse it. I am convinced there are many deviations from truth unnoticed. But oh, my friends, guard this avenue to all that is dreadful. Remember, mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other, and that with him who cannot lie, no liar can dwell.' "

Brownrigg had fidgetted for some time, and at last said, "Well, this is all very good and very excellent, and you have a fine long memory, Sir." Then drawing himself up, "as for truth, no man is more particular than I am, as our Peggy, whom I have brought up from a child, has never dared to tell me any thing that varied from the truth, she would have lost her place imme-

diately." Esther knew it would not do to remind her uncle of the prevarication he himself had used; he would have called it cant, straining at gnats, and swallowing camels, &c. So the subject dropped, and Brownrigg stood like a conqueror on the field of battle; and the children coming in loaded with flowers and fruits, gave a turn to the conversation, though not to thought.

There was in Brownrigg's mind a solidity and turn for reflection, which, had he been an educated man, would not have left him satisfied with mediocrity. Though his opportunities for improvement had been few, he had improved them, and was what the world would call a clever sensible man. Now, though he was as much on his guard against methodism, as he called it, as a citizen is against a pickpocket, yet he never closed his ears to what he thought a good thing; and though some of Mr. Michael's quotations from his friend Mr. Walker were such as he thought every one else would make, still that part of his discourse against indulgences and bad company was pretty good—indeed it was very good, he should think of it; and, as he was tying his neckcloth before the glass next morning, and drawing the long ends through till each matched the other to a hair's breadth, "No, no," said he, "Jo-

nathan Brownrigg is not a man to resist a good argument ; if you wish a child not to be a glutton when he is a man, you ought not to cram him when he is a child. That really was a sensible thought of that Mr. Walker's, he was a person I always liked ; 'tis a pity he is a——," and he began whistling ; and in the next minute, " Peggy, child, where's my breakfast ?" and the nice little girl came in with the tea-things.

The rising families at the mill and the Brow very soon gave evidence of the benefits of orderly training ; and the young Michael, who had often had his eye directed to his prayer-book by uncle Michael, began to play the tutor to little Jem, and look comically grave at her as she was playing with the spangles on a little fan which godmamma had given her, shaking his little curled head most sagely at her want of attention, on this her third visit to the house of prayer. It was indeed so very droll, that even uncle Michael himself was obliged to take out his handkerchief and turn his eyes another way, to avoid the contagion of a smile from Fanny ; and as the little mentor led his young cousin from church, they heard him say, " Jemmy dear, you should never play with things at church." The little arch rebel looked at him with saucy indifference, as though she would have

said, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge;" and the young Michael, like many other mentors, felt his consequence some way taken down, he could not tell how.

Rose had been very anxious for her mistress's interest, making as much butter as she possibly could, and very sharp with the key of her dairy, and which is very common in such cases, where people are too anxious to be rich, some suspicion rose in Esther's mind lest the weight of the butter should be insufficient—it never had been yet; but on this morning, as she walked through her orderly dairy, and saw her beautiful pounds of butter lay side by side, at eighteen pence each pound, her heart misgave, and she said, "This would indeed be an injury to God's cause, if the Brow farm butter should want in weight;" and when she weighed it, which she did most carefully, though it could not be said to want weight, it went so very close, that Esther reduced the three-and-twenty pounds to one-and-twenty, having it all made up again to Rose's discontent, though she uttered not a single word; but after Esther went out of the dairy, Ann Medway, in passing, heard Rose say, "My mistress is a deal too particular." This was quite enough, she treasured it in her

mind, and it was laid by for some convenient opportunity.

But this care of Esther's to maintain a good conscience towards God and towards man was acknowledged even by enemies ; no one ever thought of weighing their butter but were sure to walk up, as soon as the servant appeared in the market. People were even waiting for it—both quality and quantity recommended it. The same if Michael had a horse to sell, he would be telling the defects before the person who was buying it inquired ; but this brought its own blessing in confidence of character, and our hero seemed in some danger of that woe which is denounced against those of whom all men speak well. In his own bosom he had many conflicts, a deepened sense of his own depravity, and much of the internal conflict with which a sincere Christian is often harassed ; and this had been strengthened by a visit to his old and reverend pastor ; that he should be struggling who had been a guide and a light to others ; that he should tremble, who had been feet to the lame. Oh, we have a subtle enemy, who will make even our humility a snare ; but as it is frequently found under the attendance on a faithful ministry, that there is deliverance for the captive soul, so it was here. Mi-

chael had not even confided his discouragement to his bosom friend ; he knew she would suffer, and he feared the contagion of doubt. In his uneasy state he would not even speak to Mr. Lascelles, but he was most fervent in prayer, and a sermon of this good man from these words was at this time a great consolation. " Deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom."

Mr. Lascelles dwelt so much upon the security of this ransom, the certainty that it was paid, the sufficiency of the sum, the complete satisfaction of the creditor, to whom it was due ; and all this was not mere assertion, but proved by rich scripture quotation. Thus, for instance : " deliver him from going down into the pit," the desire, on the part of God, that man should be delivered, then in the fulness of time he came who should deliver, " Lo, I come to do thy will." Again : the confirmation that light was in the world, " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ;" then, that the whole is fully completely accomplished, was declared by those words : " It is finished." Lastly, all was clear of him who promised. Yet again, there might be doubt, there might be fear on the part of those who were to receive these blessings, let such depend on these promises,

“ Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world ;” “ Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

We may truly say, that Michael’s trials arose from his prosperity. Mr. Lascelles touched this also ; he said, “ Many a good man has feared, from the very circumstance of his being too much blessed, too prosperous. He was ready to say, ‘ what have I to suffer ? what are my cares ?’ This is a proof of peculiar grace, when those whom prosperity make humble, lest they should forget God ; for it is the common nature of wealth and success to harden the heart, not soften it—to make it confident, and not fearful. Let such rejoice, that God has not left them to themselves ; when they begin to fear, let them begin to hope, and in the multitude of these sorrows, which peculiarly press down their spirits, may the comforts of the Lord refresh their souls.”

Every word in this discourse went direct to Michael’s bosom ; he knew he had never spoken to any human creature, or he should have thought some one had betrayed him, and that his kind friend was thus endeavouring to comfort and support him. But no ; he had adopted this idea, that it was a part of his duty here to imitate his

Saviour, and to tread the wine-press alone. "Perhaps," said he to himself, "I might take comfort sooner, if I could speak to some one; but then I should not be so certain that my help came from above. No, I must not confer with flesh and blood; I must look to the hills from whence cometh my help;" and he did so, and the consolation which he received from this sermon was such, that it was long a support to his mind when clouds came over it.

His faithful partner was not insensible or indifferent: she saw that he struggled with something which he did not wish to communicate, but she had too much prudence and native delicacy to endeavour to penetrate what he sought to conceal; so in this instance he kept to his resolution, and laid his burthen only before the Lord. In all other minor matters, where their common interest was concerned, he was completely open, and he has been frequently heard to say, "Thou art indeed a help-meet, my love." Their union was so unbroken, that it interested the whole family when they saw the heads of the house living in the spirit of kindness and love, they could not with any shadow of propriety contend; and indeed, Michael and Esther took good care that they should have very little opportunity, for their day

was so employed that they had no vacuum. He thought there was great truth in that line of Dr. Watts :

“ For Satan finds some mischief still,
For idle hands to do.”

though they were very careful never to overwork them, or to appoint them more than they could perform with neatness and punctuality ; and this orderly training was not confined to their own business, but they continued their care over the expenditure of those beneath their roof ; persuading their servants to put aside some portion of their earnings in every year, and confide it in the savings bank, that they might have somewhat to bestow on their parents, and thus return those kindnesses received in infancy. Esther insisted upon their clothes being mended with neatness ; she never gave them ribbons, lace, or any sort of finery ; but if there was any extraordinary care of her children, or herself, some *solid, useful* gift, was sure to be bestowed, and their stores were thus suitably increased, without receiving them by foolish gifts, which only serve to flatter vanity. And Michael, on his part, when the travelling tailor came his yearly round, offering to repair the damages of time, Michael would insist upon having all mended that was torn, and

usually paid the expense himself ; and thus kept his family in economical order. Their care of their health was equally marked and judicious, the slightest cold was taken care of ; and in the winter, if the younger ones walked at all carefully, as though they had chilblains, he immediately attended to it, prescribing simple remedies in time, so that, commonly speaking, they had a cleanly, healthy, domestic circle. He watched every countenance, and we may truly say, that he lived in the fear of God, and in love to his fellow-creatures.

At first, these peculiarities were wearisome, “ Master was a coddle, master was putting his finger into every thing ;” but when the men found the maids employed in the long winter evenings knitting their warm socks, and the maids that they were well paid for this labour, to which at first they went very reluctantly ; when they found, that as the tailor came, the old clothes of their master, which he commonly wore pretty close, were cut into gaiters, and quilted thickly, laid by with care till the winter set in ; when they found that his whole mind was employed in providing for every comfort, and fencing them against every danger, they became satisfied, and even thankful ; and at those periods of the

year when different articles of the farm were to be delivered in, his excessive care for those who were to sleep out was unheard of before. He would say to the carter, "If you are going some way, which will not permit your return to night, be sure to rest at the inn, and take care of yourself, and of the little lad that drives. Have a dry sleeping-room, and provide something warm for him and yourself; only avoid excess, my good fellow." Often would the landlord of the different inns at which they put up, be surprised to hear those customers, who formerly were contented with an out-house or a ruinous loft, asking for a dry chamber for him and the boy, and a steak and a little good beer before they went to bed. "And who do you live with, pray?" says one to the little urchin who was warming himself by the fire. "I live with a very good master and mistress," says the boy; "I likes them uncommon, I would go through fire and water to serve them,—would not you, Giles?" And the landlord winking, said, "Well, and how much smutty wheat did you put off for him at the bottom of your sacks?" "Smutty wheat," said the carter. "Smutty wheat," responded the boy, "master always keeps that at home if he has any." "Oh, so you eat that, do you?"

“ Not I, because I’m an out-door servant, but master eats it in his own family, then he has it washed and cleaned, and kiln dried ; and I heard him say, as it turned out beautiful.” “ Why, it seems you are very fond of your master ? ” “ Yes I be, I never had a kinder, and never expect to get such another.” “ Oh ! I suppose he lets you have your own way.” “ Why, not at first, but now I likes his ways so well, that I commonly mind he saves me time, he saves me labour, because he gives us all a right way to do every thing.” “ Well, this is a famous man, this master of your’s ; pray, what is his name ? ” “ Kemp.” “ Farmer Kemp. Oh, oh,” said the landlord, “ I have heard of him ; that’s he that wheedled his old master out of all his property, and cheated Moss’s sister Farmer Finch’s wife that was killed. Hardly could the carter wait the conclusion of this short speech. “ *My* master wheedle, *my* master cheat ; I’d fight the best man in England who should presume to say it ; I have known master ever since he was a boy, and I know all his outgoings and his incomings, and that is more than any body here does, I believe. I have heard them as knows very well, say that master fretted more when he got that money than if he had lost it.”

Landlord. “ But you won’t say as Mrs. Finch was delighted with it, you won’t say as Miss Jemima and Mr. James were pleased.” “ Yes, I will say that ; and for why ? because I know it. Why, have not Mr. James been living at master’s house for these three months ? and have not Mrs. Finch and Miss Jemima just left ? You know that, don’t you, Tommy ? ” “ To be sure I do. And Giles, what do you think I heard Madam Finch say when she got on her horse ; and I held ’em, you know ? ” “ I can’t tell,” said Giles. “ Why, master was standing, putting things comfortable as she sat on her horse, gathering up the bridle in her hand. ‘ God bless you, Mr. Kemp,’ says she ; ‘ thank you for your kind care of me and mine. God will bless you, you good young man.’ ” “ Why,” says the landlord, “ that don’t seem as if she was very angry, to be sure ; but is not your master a Methodist ? Is not he one of the saints ? Don’t he pretend to be better than his neighbours ? ” “ I don’t know what he pretends to,” said Giles, “ but he certainly is better than his neighbours, I am sure there is no farmer like him in our parish, I thinks he is almost as good as the minister.” “ Ah, that’s what I have heard,” said the landlord, “ and I have heard that he and the

minister do take it by turns to pray, and that this Mr. Kemp can pray as long as the minister, and longer too sometimes; and I have heard say, as the minister's wife don't like it, she never goes nigh 'em, and that she was a genteel lady, and did not like to put up with such company." Giles felt he was getting more and more angry, and Michael had often said to the men, "Never answer when you are in a passion, lest you should swear; always wait a bit." So he thought within himself he would take his advice; and at last he looked up, and said, "Master Landlord, pray how old are you?" "Why, I think I'm fifty-six next Michaelmas." "And how many lies do you think you have heard in your life?" "Why, that I cannot say, a good many I don't doubt." "So I suppose," said Giles, "and if you keep a list you may put down these along the side of 'em. If you have heard that the minister is very fond of my master, you have heard the truth; and if you have heard that the minister's wife cannot leave the house, you have heard the truth; for why? because she is a delicate lady, and has not got her health: she comes to church in the chaise, and how often my master goes and opens the little door for her I cannot tell; many's the time I have

heard her say, 'Thank you, my kind Mr. Kemp, thank you.' Now, this does not look like enmity and malice, I think." "Why no," said the landlord.

The carter paid his expenses, and when he was just going to drive off from the inn, he said, "Perhaps, Mr. Landlord, you would not object if all the farmers were Methodists, if their servants, instead of taking up their talots and leaving little but dirt behind them, would pay you as we have paid you, and give you as little trouble." "I can't say but what you have behaved very well, and I like to hear a man speak well of his master; I like to be well spoken of myself, and little dogs as will fetch will carry, for they as won't speak well of their own, are not likely to speak well of the stranger; and perhaps, when you are recommending a good inn, dry sleeping chambers, and a very decent cook, not forgetting the old October, it may come to your mind, Mr. Carter, to say a word for the Black Boar." "I have nothing to say against it, Master Landlord, only I shall take care not to send you any Methodists."

It happened that year that Michael was chosen overseer; his whole view of this office he had gathered from men of better judgment and information than himself. The system of the poor laws was a bad

system, and he could not help thinking, that though it was not in his power to change them, he might gradually bring his own people to live independently of the parish. Thus, for instance, he paid them good wages, and encouraged them by little presents now and then—one a pig, another a bushel of malt, and if ever they worked extra they were sure to be better paid than usual. In fine, the whole of Michael's arrangements was gradually working to bring his people back to a state of feeling which leads to honest independence and sympathy for their natural connections.—But perhaps a dialogue between Michael and his shepherd may illustrate my meaning, and shew the principle upon which he acted more clearly.

“ Sir,” said this man, “ my poor father has been sick this fortnight, and the parish doctor says there is no hope of him, if he can't have nourishing broths and other good things.” “ As for broth,” said Michael, “ it is not possible to get better than you can have at the soup shops in this village; Mr. Lascelles's cook buys meat, and old Norris's wife is employed in nothing else but making it, and most excellent it is.” “ Well, I never did taste it,” said the shepherd, “ I never had any fancy to it; I always had a notion that all the scraps in Mr. Lascelles's kitchen went to

the making of it ; and though poor folks be poor folks, yet they are not cats and dogs.” “ You are in a great error, Mortlake,” said Michael ; “ I believe no scrap but butcher’s ever went to that soup shop, and it is a sad prejudice you have all got. I am very certain there is no better soup in this parish, not even at the Rectory. Suppose I send for a basin, or give you a ticket to go and fetch it ? ” “ As you please, Sir.” “ Well, you shall go then,” said Michael. The soup was brought, and the shepherd confessed it was excellent.” “ Well then, here is soup for your father, and as you have very good wages, Mortlake, I think it will be more for your credit to allow him from your wages so much a week.” The shepherd put his hat on one side, and scratching his ear, said, “ he did not know as his mistress would consent.” Michael, who thought he meant Esther, assured him that “ his mistress and he were talking of it together, and that they both agreed it was quite the duty of every one who could afford it do do every thing for their families without help from the parish.” “ But, Sir, I mean my wife, and I thinks she would object.” “ Oh, Mortlake, I hope not. Your parents did not go to the parish to bring you up, Mortlake.” “ I can’t say as they did, Sir ; my father was a miller, and

picked up a very decent livelihood." "And you may do the same, Mortlake, and still put by a portion for your father." "You don't mean, Sir, as I should keep father, do you?" "Who kept you before you could get your own bread, Mortlake?" "Why, to be sure, father did; but then that is quite different, I can't make father do as I bid him. It arn't to be expected. If my children were naughty, I would put them to bed out of my way; but if father is cross I must bear it. Besides, you see I was just getting the fore horse by the head, and have laid by a little against a rainy day, but if I be to allow father, that will all go." "But when your father's well he maintains himself, Mortlake; and I should think it would make him well sooner, to find that he had a son who cared for him. Now I tell you what, you have been very careful this last spring time, and I do not think I lost above one lamb. Now I tell you what I will do for you: I will give you thirty shillings towards keeping your father, sooner than you should go to the parish." "Why, that is very genteel of you, Sir; why, thirty shillings is as much as father would want." "But, hark ye, what, Mortlake, you are not to allowance this money, and when it is gone, say you can do no more; no, your wife must go

and see him every day, and help your poor old mother to attend him, and whatever the doctor orders you must get for him ; and when my thirty shillings is gone, you are not to harden your heart, and say you can do no more." " What, Sir, I harden my heart against father ; no, Sir, that could not be, for I am uncommon fond of father." " Have you not a brother, Mortlake ?" " To be sure I have, Sir, one as lives at Farmer Jennings's : he is the shepherd there, Sir" " So I thought, well go to him ; say nothing of what I am going to give you, but endeavour to persuade him to help your poor father now in the time of his need."

The shepherd did as his master advised. " What," says his brother, " I allow him. Are not the parish bound to allow him ?" " Ah !" said Mortlake, " did not father provide for us when we were young ? and can't we do something for him now ? why Tom, I thought you was fond of your father," said Isaac. " And so I be uncommon fond ; but why should I save the parish, arn't they bound ? Where didst ye get these notions in your head ? I'm thinking as thy master helped ye to it, so over-righteous all at once," and not one penny could he get from his brother.

This tale was told to Mr. Lascelles. "Ah! this comes of our poor laws," said he. Michael was not discouraged, he had heard Mr. Lascelles say, that it was best, in working any change, to begin with the youngest; therefore, in a long family distress which afflicted the parents of his little plough-boy, he took him into his small parlour, and shutting the door, he began as follows :

Patting his head with kindness, he said, "Charles, how old are you?" "Nine, Sir, come mothering Sunday." "Nine, why, you are getting on, Charles; next year you will be ten, should you live to see it." Charles smiled, "Yes, Sir." "I was pleased last Sunday to observe that you were very attentive at church, that you read the Psalms carefully with your brother, so here is a nice prayer-book for you." "I thank you, Sir," said Charles, and his eyes glistened with pleasure. "I think, my lad, your father has all your earnings?" "Yes, Sir, only mother says I am to have a new frock against my birthday; for you see, Sir, this has been mended pretty often." "Well, and where is the money?" Charles looked very knowingly, and said, his mother had given him so much a-week to put into his money box, and that he got quite enough into

sixpence. "But, Charles, when I called upon your father the other day, I thought his coat looked very old." "Yes, Sir." "Now, should you like to have a new frock, and your father wear his old coat, when he has got the rheumatism, and you are quite well?" "If my father wanted a coat, I think I could not be happy to wear a new dress, and see my poor father go ragged. But my frock won't cost above six shillings, and father's coat would cost a power of money." "Well, Charles, I was thinking of asking Mr. Lascelles and Mr. Brownrigg, and Mr. Meredith at the mill, all to help with a little for a coat for your father, and adding something myself; and if you were to put down your six shillings at the top of the paper, I think it would be an encouragement to these gentlemen to put down something. What do you think, Charles?" Charles did not understand him. "Now come here, child," said Michael; "your father's coat will cost thirty shillings: Now, how much is five times six?" "Five times six is thirty, Sir." "Well, there is Mr. Lascelles, I know he will give six shillings; there is Mr. Brownrigg, that makes twelve; there is Mr. Meredith at the mill, and that makes eighteen; then there is my six shillings, and that makes twenty-four. But

what shall we do for the other six, if you won't help your poor father?" "Oh, but I will, Sir, and welcome." "Well, now, that is just what I expected from you, Charles; I did indeed expect you would help us to buy your father a coat." It may be thought that Michael would immediately buy this boy a new frock; but no, he did not; he ordered him to bring his frock up, and had it very nicely mended for him with a new pair of sleeves; but it would have quite been destroying the sacrifice, had he immediately supplied the lad's exigence, and we can safely say that this kindled spirit in the mind of the boy for his poor father continued long to operate. A voluntary sacrifice which he made the following year may serve to prove this.

He saw his mother hard at work one Saturday night piecing her gown, and he said to himself, "How I do wish I could buy mother a new gown; and when he saw his sister, as he did shortly after at the mop, "Phillis," said he, "might not Walter, and you and I, put a little together to buy mother a gown? why, I was thinking there was every body in the parish gets a new gown but our mother;" and Phillis and he went up to her one Monday morning, and put their arms round her neck, and begged her to accept of the gown which they had

bought her; and said, "Now do ye get it made against next Sunday, for we shall be proud to see you wear it." The mother's tears flowed plentifully; she kissed her children again and again; said, God would bless them for their duty, and she should never forget it; it would be the pleasantest gown that ever she wore; and we believe there are few mothers but would feel this, and there is nothing so hard to bear as coldness and neglect from the child you have cherished, so much does tenderness and affection warm the parental bosom. "Ah!" said the mother to herself, "this is all that good Mr. Kemp's doing; never was a more dutiful boy than that Charles has been to me. How true it is, that a good master maketh a good servant; they may call him a Methodist if they will, but I am sure his methods are good methods; I have reason to respect him, however." It is commonly found that persons who are very much prejudiced against religion lose those prejudices, where their interest is concerned. Thus it was with the mother of our little plough-boy; and as he frequently stayed to family worship with Michael, so he had frequently carried home any thing which particularly struck him: and the mother's mind became desirous of instruction, and

her gossiping visits amongst her foolish neighbours were less frequent. The first steps of improvement are often imperceptible; the stream of grace is fine as a silver thread, till it becomes broad as a river, watering and fertilizing as it flows. Many were the opportunities which the extending influence of this good young man gave him of promoting that cause which lay nearest his heart; if he sold his sheep, and the person who bought them thought them not so good as he expected, and complained that they were dear, Michael was ready to return any portion of the money that might be reasonably expected: and when a neighbouring farmer said to him, "Why, Mr. Kemp, a bargain is a bargain," Michael would reply, "True, Sir, but my conscience will not let me make a hard bargain." The result of all this care for the honour of religion was, that though they were still prejudiced, they were convinced that Mr. Kemp's religion was kind-hearted and liberal.

There was something in the natural character of Mr. Lascelles, noble, dignified, and liberal; and when such a character expands with all the tenderness of christian sympathy, it becomes a lovely object for contemplation. It might be said of him, that God had given him a large heart,

and when he was bringing out of his treasures things new and old, he was frequently found dwelling on liberality as one of the most prominent features of Christianity; and Michael found his heart warmed by his friend, cheered and renovated by the continual influence of the Scripture on his heart. He was in a state of preparation for the instructions of his minister, and did indeed receive the Word in childlike simplicity, that he might grow thereby. He was never found fancying himself capable of the ministerial character; he thought he might be a good farmer, a good master, a kind parent, and a tender husband, but for the work of the ministry he had sense enough to perceive he was incompetent. A life devoted to that cause without any other employment, he observed to be quite sufficient. There was scarcely a day throughout the year in which his pastor was not called, either to visit the sick or to support the dying, to counsel and instruct the ignorant, and constantly perform those offices and render that assistance which poverty requires. Again, the close study, the deep thought, the frequent tracing of God's providential care in pages of profane and sacred history, with incidental observations which his own experience furnished. Michael had the good sense to per-

ceive that for this he was incapable ; and when invited to join some well meaning but injudicious person in a neighbouring village, in a meeting for prayer and expounding the Scriptures, he was satisfied with repeating in the week to his family that which he learnt from the preacher the Sunday ; and if any thing struck him in a new light as he read the Scriptures, he would consult Esther in private, and this often furnished very sweet and profitable subjects for intercourse.

There was one man, a butcher, whose life was certainly much changed by the power of religion : he was of an ardent temper, easily kindled into violent emotion, and having been persuaded to accompany a neighbour to one of these religious meetings, his imagination became fired, and he thought he too could preach ; so that, whenever there was a disappointment in the regular preacher, this butcher was sent for to supply. And one day, as he was bargaining with Michael for a cow, sharpening his knife upon the steel as it hung before him mechanically, he said, “ Now, Mr. Kemp, we are sorry not to see you yonder ; we had a fine meeting on Friday, and I understand we are to have a powerful preacher down next Sunday.” Michael looked a little ironical, when he

asked him of what trade the minister was that was expected, whether a barber or a shoemaker, saying, he really believed, if a person of any trade might be excused for turning preacher, it was these two, whose vacancy of mind, while their fingers were employed, it might naturally be supposed, would sometimes mislead their judgment. “But as for me, neighbour, I have so much to do, that I have no excuse for forgetting myself; and I really find that I have so much to learn, that I never attempt to teach except my own family, and to them I commonly repeat what the good pastor teaches me on the Sunday.” The butcher, who found every word of this convey some reproof to himself, observed, “that he did not see the good of repeating what they had heard, but thought they might as well remember that themselves.” Michael was ready to say, “I do not know how you find it, neighbour, but I find my family can bear reminding, they don’t get the lessons so very perfect.”

In short, Michael was incorrigible; he went once by the advice of his pastor, but that once was enough; he saw so much vanity in the midst of their religious exercises, that he was convinced, for him at least, it would be a scene of danger; “for

even while I stood there," said he, "listening to others, either Satan or my own corrupt heart said, 'Why, I could pray better than this.'" This good young man started at his danger, saying, "Lord, pardon me," in the secret recesses of his own bosom; he sought the quiet walk in his garden, where he had been accustomed to pour out his soul before God, entreating that gracious protection from the world and from himself which he had so often found.

The little cousins were very intimate, very fond of each other, and the young Michael having been so long his uncle's pet, felt himself quite as much at home at the Brow as at the Mill; and as he was now nearly eight years old, was allowed to wander wherever his fancy led him. Not so the young Jemima, but like other young rebels, she was very fond of forbidden paths, and it required some guard over her truant footsteps to keep her always at home. In order for this, the little Merediths were frequent visitors at the Brow Farm, and many an hour's amusement has Esther found in listening to their conversation. The most favourite topic with little Michael was what happened at his school, and sometimes Esther was obliged to interfere to prevent the repetition of

what she thought her little girl had better not know. There were some boys who came from a neighbouring village, who had told Michael long stories of the wonders of their fair, how ladies danced with the rope, and quack doctors cured people of all disorders only by looking at them; jugglers who told you what you were thinking of. The little girl sat wondering, and at a loss to understand it all, and could only in her own innocent manner say, "O dear, how pretty!" Aunt Esther suffered this till she heard Michael say that he would take her, that she should ride in the roundabout, where there was a boat and a one-horse chaise. At this Esther took her little maid upon her lap, saying, "No, little Jem, I should think cousin Michael would never go to such a place, and if he did, little Jem must stay at home with mother." But Jem's imagination was fired, and many days passed before she could forget the wonders of the fair. This slight incident furnished a lesson to both houses: if they were not to go into the follies of the world, they must not be exposed to the hearing of them.

And the question arose how to avoid this. In a world of sin and sorrow it seemed next to impossible to keep them from the hearing of it, and yet Michael was

firmly resolved that he would train his children in the way they should go. "I will set before them the good and the right way; I know the Lord will do his part, only let me be careful to do mine." The difficulty was, how to gain the necessary education for young Meredith without exposing him, and how to allow the delightful intercourse of affection between the young cousins, and yet preserve them from lingering after a world full of dangers. The bare repetition of way-side converse was full of dangers; the very walk from the Brow to the Mill, and from the Mill to the Brow, furnished something for the animated mind of the young Michael, and his uncle could not but observe how much deeper were the impressions of folly and nonsense on the hearts of these young ones, than any lesson, however pleasant, taught by wisdom and experience. Esther was speaking of this to her mother; her good old aunt, sitting by her, said in her peculiar manner, "Ah, I know it, I see it in my garden." Though Esther was so used to her aunt, she could but look round in astonishment at this little speech, and with an inquiring eye, said "Aunt?" "Why, Esther, child, don't you remember when you and I worked in our garden, raking, hoeing, and sowing our seeds; and don't you

remember, when the feathered seeds came flying round us, how often we have said, that these took root and flourished without any care, while we laboured almost in vain to make our flowers grow. You see, Esther, it is just the same with the children; the weeds and the trumpery do grow and flourish, you see, while the pretty flowers you plant do droop and fade. There is but one, dear, that can make your flowers grow, the Lord of the harvest."

Esther. "True, aunt, and I am sure—" "Yes, I know what you would say, Hetty, you're sure that you and your husband do pray, and have prayed; and what do the Scriptures say? 'Pray without ceasing.' 'Men ought always to pray, and not to faint,' 'Continuing instant in prayer.'" Poor dear Esther made no reply, but said within herself, "Do we not always pray in earnest? It seems as though my aunt thought we depended on ourselves, and I am sure we do not." At this silence of Esther's her aunt looked up, and said, "I know what ye be thinking of, dear, Ye be thinking, as I tell you, what ye do know and practice every day of your lives. But remember, Hetty, we do all want reminding, I am sure I do, that am an old traveller, we must have here a little and there a little, line upon line. Do you remember what St. Paul says, dear, 'Not as though

I had attained or were already perfect, but I follow on :'

'Go on to seek to know the Lord,
And practice what you know.'"

Strange to say, yet true it was, that this young mother was rather teased than profited by all this ; she knew it, she practised it, but as yet the tide of nature in the dear little ones was too strong for her, and the fond parents were precisely in the same state, waiting and wanting some little plan of counteraction to be immediately executed for the benefit of the young ones ; and this short scriptural plan of the dear old Christians seemed to Esther a repetition of admitted truth, and not to their present purpose. But when she got home, when she considered it, she could not but acknowledge to herself, that though some little scheme for present practice might be suggested, its eventual success depended on the very advice she had received. Thus it is with the best ; Christians are sometimes desirous of a short cut to their purpose, forgetting that, like the husbandmen, they must wait for the former and latter rain, for the sun to shine, and the dews to descend, ere their plants shall thrive, and their seed ripen for life and glory. But there never was a sincere believer, however weak, who sought the eternal arm, but sooner or later

found the support he sought. Never one who desired light but that promise was fulfilled, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

While they were pausing, and seeking the best method to avoid worldly association for their little ones, an event happened which seemed favourable to their wishes. The war was over, and a lieutenant in the navy with a large family, who had been long known to Mr. Lascelles, wrote to him, to inquire if there was any cottage in his parish to which a poor man might bring a large family; it must be reasonable, because his means were very limited; but it must not be small, because he had many children. Indeed, he had thought of adding to his income by tuition, teaching some branches of mathematics, the first rudiments of Latin; "and as for French," said he, "a long residence in that detestable country, though a great part of it was spent in prison, has made me very competent. If therefore, dear Sir, you could find a resting-place for a tired warrior, you would confer a lasting benefit on me and mine. My family consists chiefly of the wrong sort: the two younger only are boys, one in arms. Now it is not that I doubt of his providing care, but unless I can add something to our li-

mitted means, we shall find it a hard matter to live, and my wife is not strong, and really wants some indulgences which I would gladly give her. A line soon will oblige, dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully."

"Now, what shall we do about this, Mentoria? I don't know that we want schoolmasters, do we? Have we not a redoubtable doctor in the next village, and have we not national schools for our other classes." Mrs. Lascelles declared she did not know, but she should be so glad to serve poor Mrs. Ferguson. "No one can doubt, my love, but what you would be glad to serve all whom you know," said Mr. Lascelles, "but we must find a nest for these parent birds, and we must get a class for this tutor; eleven mouths to feed is no trifle, he must not starve them. But we will do nothing in a hurry, love."

It was some weeks after the receipt of this letter before Mr. Lascelles ventured to hope he could be of any use to his friend Ferguson, and even then he acted cautiously and timidly, as one afraid of injuring those whom he wished to serve. But when Michael called upon him to ask his counsel respecting his young ones, and when he stated how anxious he was to

keep his little nephew from the every-day walk to the next village, which exposed him to wayside acquaintance; "Why, this might do indeed," said Mr. Lascelles; "but do you think, my good friend, you could raise enough?" Michael wondered. "Enough, Sir;" "Ah! sufficient numbers of pupils, I might, but I had not consulted you." He then related what was pending in his own mind. "Does not this seem providential, Sir?" said Michael. "Why, my good fellow, at your age I should have said so, but with warm feelings and an immature judgment, sometimes too much in a hurry to wait for clear guidance, I have made some mistakes, and found that in my haste there were tares among my wheat. This has given me an unnatural sort of caution, and I perhaps walk more carefully than many men of slower temperature. One thing that makes me hesitate is, that my good friend says nothing of religious advantages; certainly he knows my principles, and that I would not willingly mislead my hearers; but he utters no word upon the subject, which ought to be the grand mover in every Christian parent who seeks an abiding residence for his children."

Michael's hopes outran his fears in this business, "he could not help thinking," he

told Mr. Lascelles, "that such a man that sought a residence in his parish could not be adverse to true religion." "My good friend, I do not think he is adverse, but a man who trains youth should be *warm* and zealous in the best of causes." Michael agreed that it *should* be, and the affair stood over so long, that MR. LASCELLES received another letter more pressing, and the concluding clause seemed to settle the business. It was to this effect: "I am the more anxious to come into your neighbourhood, as I feel the importance for my rising family of those principles which I know you have long taught. A ship is a village at sea, and I am sure I have reason to be thankful that I ever sailed with my captain, whose consistent life and example awed the profligate, and confirmed the sober. What he was to me I can never know in this world; he is gone to that Saviour whose despised disciple he was, and even those who basely called him hypocrite and cant, well knew that he was one of those of whom the world was not worthy." Mr. Lascelles was at his breakfast table when he received this letter, in that very room where his mother had delighted to train the myrtle over her parlour window; and Mrs. Lascelles was at that moment standing with her back to him,

tending the shoots of a fine myrtle she had also trained over the same window, knowing that it revived pleasing sensations in the mind of her beloved partner. She was thus employed, when she heard him say, "Well, this will do. Yes, yes, we will have him here, if it pleases God to prosper us;" and she turned round with an inquiring look, "My love?" "Yes, my love, Ferguson is just the man I could have wished." His wife smiled. "Has he told you so, love?" "No, no, he has not told me so, Mentoria, but his letter pleases me," and he passed it into her hand.

Matters were in this train, and nothing wanting but the ample cottage; when Brownrigg (who about once in a quarter of a year called at the Rectory) inquired if Mr. Lascelles were at home and disengaged. Michael Meredith was with him. In this boy's countenance was all the openness of his mother, with somewhat of his father's fine contour. He had so many friends to tell him what he should do, that combined with the natural ease of his own character, he was what may be called a well-behaved child. Placed in a room where many things were new to him, there was no need to tell him not to touch; his eye wandered over the room in silence, and he was particularly attracted by a

model of the rock of Gibraltar, which was finely executed ; and under a glass, on a small table, the opposite shore of Africa was also sketched, just sufficient to admit of the representation of a small ship passing between the straits. The impression of this beautiful curiosity was so strong, that it gave a decided turn of the study of geography in the mind of this active lad. Mr. Lascelles, with a courtesy which never forsook him, opened his writing-case, and showed his young visitor a drawing of the same place. “ I was once stationed there,” said he, turning to Brownrigg, “ and this model was executed by a servant of my own, whose ingenuity has since brought him forward.” “ I called on you, Sir,” said Brownrigg, “ from my nephew Mr. Kemp, to say that he has heard Mr. Jennings has a large cottage to let, and that he had deputed me to look at it, which I have done with as much care as possible ; and I think, that with very little alteration at the expense of about fifty pounds, it may make a very decent residence. You may be sure I was closely beset by the ladies : ‘ Was it for a family or a single gentleman ? ’ ‘ Perhaps some gentleman that was just going to marry ? ’ ‘ Do you know such a one, ladies ? For my part, all my friends are provided for.’

‘ Oh !’ said Miss Tiny, whose assurance is most undaunted, ‘ we did not know but what Mr. Joseph was going to settle in these parts ; we thought it might be natural that Mr. Kemp might wish to have his brother near him.’ ‘ I do not think Mr. Kemp has such a wish, ladies. Joseph Kemp gets his living very decently, and I should not think so wise a man as my nephew would run any risk of unsettling his brother.’ ‘ Had I any relation?’ ‘ No, ladies, I am a valuable bit of china in very fine preservation,’ and I drew myself up, and looked as tall as I could, Sir, and squared my elbows like the handle and spout of an antique teapot. ‘ You see I am as well kept as a choice morsel from Queen Elizabeth’s cabinet, the more valuable from being a single piece.’ The ladies seemed puzzled, Sir, and their inquiries went no farther ; so that, if you wish your friend’s name not mentioned, I have done no mischief.” Mr. Lascelles had a relish for humour, and did not dislike the dry drollery of Brownrigg’s character, but he was cautious how he encouraged any species of mental dissipation, more particularly with those whose time seemed *too* valuable to be thus played with ; so assuming a mild, yet grave air, he said, “ I do not think my friend Fer-

guson would at all object to having his name mentioned, though I see no necessity to gratify such unbounded curiosity. He is an excellent creature, and his nice little wife may perhaps prove a kind friend to these trifling young people, who certainly want some one to direct them, having too indulgent a father, and too gentle a mother, properly to brace minds so relaxed by folly. Ferguson, Sir, is a man about our standing, a thoughtful sensible fellow, who feels the worth of time, and employs it well; and I am happy to add, what I certainly did not know till lately, that he is duly impressed with the importance of eternity. Now such a one with a wife like-minded, may be incalculably useful to these light ladies, so that in fixing them near, I hope I am killing two birds with one stone. Thanks to you, my kind Mr. Brownrigg, for your active exertions in this business."

We need not tell our readers that Mr. Lascelles was understood, that these side blows lost not their aim. The acuteness of the perception of our Esther's uncle was such, that the drift of every conversation was perfectly understood, and this thought passed his mind. "Ferguson is not such a trifling fellow as poor old Brownrigg. I comprehend you, my

good Sir ; you cannot only kill two birds with one stone, but there is but a slight gradation between the trifling Miss Jennings and the trifling old Brownrigg." Thus cogitated the good-natured tobacco-nist, and had really forgotten where he was, when young Michael burst out, " Oh, there is a pig in the garden !" and was off like an arrow to drive it out ; and Brownrigg, thinking his mission finished, made his best city bow, assured the excellent pastor, that if there was any thing else he could do in the business it would give him great satisfaction, he being an idle fellow, and quite at his service. So they parted, mutually pleased with each other, Lascelles liking the good temper of Brownrigg, and Brownrigg by no means displeased with the pastor's gentle concern for his improvement of time. No, it was in the way of his duty, and he liked to see *every man perform his duty.*

Michael did not fail to find much opposition to every plan he adopted for the benefit of the poor ; even farmers, whose pockets he was endeavouring to save from the hand of needless extravagance, were perpetually throwing some obstacle in the way to any end at any point, which their good sense had not suggested. There were gifts in the parish, and these were much abused: it

had been usual to divide the sum among the farmers, and leave them to distribute it as they pleased; they of course gave their own work people, so that whether deserving or otherwise, whether at ease or in want, they had what is called their share. Now Michael thought this an abuse, it was for the relief of the indigent, and, as overseer of the poor, he knew his right, and kept the whole sum, resolving to apply it as necessity should require. Now he was aware that his character would lie open to the undeserved censure of keeping this money, so he was particularly cautious, and kept a book for the separate entry of every shilling he disposed of, and had given a formal receipt to the person who brought him the interest. At the first vestry after this, two of the farmers said, "Mr. Kemp, Sir, we have not as yet—" Michael knew what was coming, but he was determined not to anticipate. "Mr. Kemp, Sir," said the other, "the legacy money—have you received it, Sir?" "Yes, Sir, I have;" and Mr. Lascelles immediately said, "and I have received my part of it." A sly old farmer, who disliked Mr. Lascelles the more, because he deserved all his love and all his veneration, said, "Oh, no doubt, Sir; but we" and then, with an inquiring look at Mr.

Jennings, said, "Have you, Sir, received any of the money?" "*Not one shilling,*" with stress laid upon every word. Michael made no reply, but rising, asked Mr. Lascelles if he would permit him to show the copy of that clause in the testator's will which was lodged in the church chest? "Undoubtedly, Sir." So Michael took the key, produced the document, and read as follows: "This sum of thirty-six pounds half-yearly interest shall be paid into the hands of the rector and the overseer of the poor for the time being, to be applied to the use of the industrious poor who endeavour to keep their families in decent respectability." There was a murmur among the farmers; some said, they had never heard this before, they wondered how it came in the chest. Mr. Lascelles, looking kindly round, said, "At the time, gentlemen, this noble legacy came to our parish, I was a school-boy, and my excellent father employed me to copy it in the very letter and spirit of the testator; and if you observe, here is written at the bottom, in my father's own hand, "I have had this copy, that the money may be applied exactly for the purposes designed." For myself, gentlemen, I never have given one shilling to those who had relief from the parish, because I was quite aware that this

money was designed to add some comforts to that class of persons to whom it was bequeathed, and not to pass into the pockets of the farmers by lessening parish rates." The farmers smiled at each other, and old Jennings observed, "it would not go far in such a parish as that." "Very true," replied the pastor, "therefore there is the less temptation to violate the will of the donor." So Michael gave his part with great care, according to the necessities he witnessed, going carefully through the parish, and inquiring into the solid wants of each of the parties. Some wanted linen, some coals; one poor old man, who had kept his cottage, and done every thing to fence out the weather, yet could never afford to have his windows mended, was made comfortable by half the sum being applied to this purpose; and as Esther walked with him in his rounds of inquiry, all her ingenuity was employed in cheap but useful thoughts for bettering the condition of those she visited; and how often has she come away sighing and lamenting there was so much left to be done. But the blessings of those who were ready to perish was upon them, and when inquiry was made, it was found that not one in ten of those persons for whose use this money was designed ever received it; none, in

short, but those to whom Mr. Lascelles had given it ; and yet, by the silent operation of that homeborn principle, natural affection, the parish was relieved, and they could not understand how ; the rates were lowered, that they found, and yet the doctor had been sent for whenever there was occasion, and Mr. Kemp had not contracted for yearly attendance, they could not tell how he had done it ; they must own he had managed very well, but then Mr. Lascelles gave away a great deal of physic to be sure. “ But that is no new thing,” said a young farmer, who had just come to the parish ; “ I have heard he always *did* give away.” “ Well, well,” said one, “ I do think he has managed very well.” “ Yes,” said another, “ I think he has, and the people all seem pretty well satisfied too.” “ Not all,” said Mr. Jennings, rising up. “ No,” said the dry old farmer, “ not your drunken carter, who spent every shilling given him last year at the Feathers.” Jennings grinned, and the party broke up. The trials of life, viewed with the Christian’s eye, have this tendency ; they teach him, that however blessings are scattered in his path, this is not his rest ; and even when he feels mercy encompassing him on every side ; when his cup runs over with wordly

prosperity, in this moment he rejoices with trembling; he would not live always, he well knows that for him to depart is far better, yet all the days of his appointed time he waits till his heavenly Father says, "Come up higher."

Michael and Esther were so completely devoted to God, so convinced of the nothingness of every thing here to satisfy a Christian mind, that their dangers arose not so much from any thing worldly as from the continued respect, love, and veneration of all with whom they stood connected. Happily they were aware of this, and never ceased to warn each other; and one morning, as they were walking to church, and Betty Smith had gone on before them with their two little ones, the sun shining brilliantly, all nature in her richest dress, Esther said, "I know not how it is, my dear, but I tremble lest I should be too happy, too satisfied with the blessings which surround me." "My love, I do not see any deadness in your heart towards God"—"Neither do I feel it, but we seem really so encompassed with mercy, and at this moment so entirely without trial, that I cannot but fear." "I think," said her good husband, "he that knoweth whereof we are made best knows what we must be; he seems to have given us all

things richly to enjoy, but he can also defend us in this danger." And when in the Litany they came to that part, "In all time of our wealth, good Lord deliver us," they looked round at each other involuntarily; and Esther, slipping her hand into Michael's, pressed it with tender affection, and the beautiful aspiration, "Good Lord deliver us!" was breathed with unusual fervour. But although they seemed surrounded with the goods of this life, it was no small trial to them to see the decline of those they loved, and to watch the increasing feebleness of the aunt Margaret and the parent Mary. It is true, they still walked to church side by side, and still were seated carefully at the upper end of Michael's pew; and still that pale faint star, glimmering in the dawn of a brighter day, was watched with pleasure by those who foretold the coming radiance. Yet Esther could but remember that the lot of all living awaited them, and could but tremble in the anticipation that ere long she must see those eyes which always dwelt with delight and kindness upon her, closed for ever. But it was only when they looked increasingly feeble that she felt thus. By the side of their own quiet fire, with every little comfort that age needs, a cleanly little maid that brother Jonathan

had appointed to wait upon them, and above all, hearts tuned to his praise, who thus inclined all hearts to love them, under these circumstances, it was delightful to contemplate them, and the withering hue of age was forgotten. "It is long since you came to see us," said Michael to Margaret; "we wish to have you again soon." "Ah, my good young man, we must give that up, I believe, your hill is too much for us;" and when Esther thought, "Ah, they have been to the Brow for the last time," she walked to the window to hide her tears. But if these good women did not go out, they had plenty of visitors at home, among whom, the most constant, was our old friend Jem Brown: he never forgot the days when his clove-pink was gathered in a wrong spirit. Indeed, this young man, who had in his early days given such pain to his uncle, and all that wished him well, was now exemplary for kindness to his relative, and to those who needed his care; and as they were one day sitting together, "I owe you much," said Jem. "Mrs. Beal; never can I forget the lessons I received at your fire, from you and your excellent husband; he was a good man, wise, and mild." "Ah, we shall soon meet again." "Then," said James, "you do think we

shall know one another?" "To be sure I do," said Margaret; "'those who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him again.' 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me,' says David. And was not Lazarus in Abraham's bosom? And are we to suppose that the thief upon the cross was the only one with Christ in Paradise? Surely not. No, no, James Brown, depend upon it, we shall all meet together, we shall all appear before his judgment-seat; and those who trust in him here, and live to his glory, they will join in the same song in one glorious company, singing, 'Worthy is the Lamb who hath washed us and redeemed us.' No, no, I will never believe but where knowledge is perfect, we shall have that pleasant knowledge, the knowledge of one another." "Ah," said James, "it is very pleasant to think of meeting, when we know that our friends have loved the Lord Jesus. But, Mrs. Beal, suppose my father had not been a good man, and suppose I should miss him?" "Ah, James, such knowledge is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it, child; I don't know how you find it, but I am often obliged to stop in the midst of all my inquiries, and to say, 'Lord, thou knowest,' and again, 'he doeth all things well.' But here," said Margaret,

in her usual arch manner, when she was about to say any thing she thought conclusive, "I am thinking that he who has brought me through all my life in peace and safety to the present hour, is worthy of all my trust and confidence, and with him I am ready to leave what I am too weak to understand." "Mrs. Beal, you are sure to be in the right, and I know for why; because you put your trust in him who never fails to satisfy the soul that relies on him." "Why, James Brown, I think I am on the safe side." "That you are indeed," said James. These intimate conversations made James's little visits to his neighbour so pleasant, that he was always dropping in when he had a spare half hour. It lay in his way home, and had it not, he would have made a curve to visit the cottage of his early friends; and often has James seen the neat Peggy with a small basket of Brownrigg's grass, or his little dish of peas carefully saved and exhibited, we must own, with somewhat of pride, before any one in the parish could get them. He would often say, "Mine is a small concern, but it is well looked after, and ye see I can have my peas before the rector." This harmless vanity offended no one but the Scotch gardener; he thought it reflected on his care.

As for James Brown, he laughed at it, and was glad in his heart to see his old friends so kindly attended. But he noticed the little Peggy: her very neat appearance, her costume, not at all like that of the modern maid-servants, but after Brownrigg's own notions of propriety and cleanliness.

“ Well,” said James, “ if I ever do marry, that girl shall be my wife, if she will have me.” But he was aware of one thing, that Mr. Brownrigg would hardly consent; and there was another subject on which he was not quite certain, Was she a Christian? Of this he was uncertain; he knew that Betty Smith was fond of her; he often saw them come out of church together, and once he overheard her talking about the sermon to Betty; he thought these were good signs, and he was disposed to notice every thing favourable; but we are happy to add, he determined to make this part of the matter quite sure before he opened his mind.

It was in one of his visits to neighbour Beal's cottage, that Peggy came in with a very nice chicken and some brocoli, and she blushed and curtsied, and looked down when James Brown opened the door to let her out; and after she was gone, James said, “ Mrs. Beal, what a nice girl that is.” Margaret's eye looked brilliant, and

her brow was curved as she repeated, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, James Brown, mind that." James was about to declare he did not covet, but he coloured up to the ears as red as scarlet; and Margaret could not help laughing at him, and looking very firm upon him, "I see you have got a conscience, James, an honest conscience, and I am very glad to see it." James said, "he was in a hurry," and slipped off, and it was some time ere he again visited Margaret.

We are pleased to inform the reader how principle went hand in hand with practice in this once wild lad; he had seen the conduct of Michael through every stage, and could not but admire it, and he determined to make it his pattern. He was anxious to have a quiet home that he might call his own; and though his uncle's little cottage was made comfortable by the services of a neighbour, still it was not like having a place with a mistress at the head of it, and he thought it would be better for the poor old man to have some one always at home; in short, his wishes and his duties seemed to agree.

The difficulty lay in how to accomplish this, so he thought he would con-

sult Michael. Michael liked the idea extremely well; he foresaw that Brownrigg would not quite approve it, he advised complete openness both with Mr. Lascelles and Mr. Brownrigg. So James took his opportunity, when his excellent lady was one morning in the green-house reading, to collect some of the very finest carnations, a sprig of cape jessamine, and as he placed them in a vine leaf, and laid them on a small table which stood before her, he bowed. His lady, in her sweet manner, said, "Thank you, James; you do raise me the sweetest flowers, and the buds of your carnations are so perfect." She saw he stopped, and looked as though he had something further to say; and this good lady was so much in the habit of inquiring into the wants and wishes of all her people, that she continued admiring the flowers to encourage him. He was encouraged. "You are so good, madam, so kind, and master is so good and kind." "I hope you do not wish to leave us, James." "I don't know, madam, not perhaps;" and he seemed unable to go on. At length, however, "I had some wish to settle, madam, and Mr. Brownrigg's Peggy." "Ah!" said Mrs. Lascelles, "very nice little girl, very suitable indeed.—Yes, yes, James; and what do you wish me to do?" "Only

to advise me, madam.” “How long have you and Peggy had a liking for each other?” said Mrs. Lascelles. “Oh, madam, I have never spoken to Peggy; I thought it better not to unsettle her mind till I had spoken to her master.” “Well, that was very right, very honourable, just as it should have been. Then you are going to Mr. Brownrigg, are you?” “Madam, I have no acquaintance with Mr. Brownrigg.” Here his mistress could hardly suppress a smile. “What do you wish, then?” “I thought perhaps, as my master would be so good as to speak for me.” “Very good; but first, I think you should just mention the matter to Peggy.” Under this sanction James was not long ere he found an opportunity; he waylaid Peggy, who blushed, and feared, and objected;—“was sure master would never consent, he was mighty particular—it was not every body that would suit him, she knew his ways, he had been a father to her, she would not ill use him for the world. Master was comical, to be sure, but master was the kindest creature. Oh, he was so good to me when I was poor and friendless, and I have never wanted for kind looks and kind words since I knew him.” But it all ended, that if master made no objection— James did not permit her to

finish, but thanked her, and immediately communicated the happy tidings to Mrs. Lascelles. The good pastor was of opinion that James had better himself call upon Mr. Brownrigg; he thought, from what he had seen of that upright man's character, the more direct and simple people were in their dealings with him, the more they were likely to succeed. In short, he advised the most unreserved conduct.

So James that very evening called on Mr. Brownrigg, with some very fine seeds of the dark sweet william, a flower he was cultivating most sedulously, and had them in such rich variety as to equal the most beautiful exotics. He saw that James lingered, as though his business was not finished, and he said, "Is there any thing, James Brown, that I can do for you." James took courage. "Yes, sir, there is indeed; my happiness depends upon you, sir." Brownrigg started as though he did not like to have it in his keeping, and asked him gravely what he meant, at the same time walking up to the glass in his own manner, pulling the folds of his neckcloth quite smooth, to wait James's reply. As soon as he came to the word Peggy, Brownrigg understood him. "So, sir, you have brought me sweet williams, and you would take away my queen Margaret,

and you have been tampering with the girl, I know it; why, she brought my shaving cup full of cold water this morning, a thing I never knew her do in my life; left the stair-case window shut; in short, the girl's head seems good for nothing, and it is you, I suppose, who have turned her brain." James declared he had only spoken to the girl the night before, and he had acted upon the advice of his mistress Mrs. Lascelles, or he should have spoke first to Mr. Brownrigg himself. "Well, well; why, all this is mighty fair, and very honourable; but, for me, it is rather inconvenient, sir. Now observe, I have trained this girl since she was as high as my knee; she knows how to do every thing for me; I am a man of fixed habits, and if you have a mind to make me uncomfortable, if you had studied for a month, sir, you could not have done it more completely than to take my little Peggy away from me.—By the way, what did she say to you when you made this foolish proposition? I dare say you told her, she was a very pretty girl." "Indeed, sir, I did not." "Why, perhaps there is no occasion, I dare say the girl knows it. Though, come, come, I won't say she is a vain girl, she is a very good little thing. But was she willing to

go away, tell me what she said, sir.” “ She would *not leave you*.” “ Little cunning jade, she knew the way to my heart,” and he whispered something about mother Eve. “ Well, sir, when people marry they have generally some plan to make the pot boil, unless perchance you are a poet, and live by your wits. What may your intentions be?”

Poor James suffered much during this inquiry, he was a generous lad, and he felt that what he had to offer was by no means equal to his own wishes; but he gathered courage. “ I have saved a little, sir, and my uncle has always promised me the cottage he lives in, and the one next door to it, sir. They are both his own, and when my uncle dies, he has often told me he will leave me all he has. I don’t suppose, sir, as it’s very much, but my uncle has always lived decent upon his little, and what he got by being clerk.” “ Well, sir, but your uncle must still live, you will not kill him out of the way; and while he lives, I want to know what you have got to support a wife.” “ Why, sir, I am making eighteen shillings a week, and my master is so very kind, that I have many little advantages in attending his house. Whenever he kills a pig, I have always a bit for my uncle; and then, sir,

he allows me to take care of the poultry : there used to be a woman, she never could contrive to keep them out of the garden, and that did vex Andrew. We have a nice court at my uncle's, I keep them there, and my master is very generous, and satisfies me very handsomely for my trouble."

Brownrigg fidgetted, he did not much like such a provision for Peggy. Unless she married to be as well off as she was now ; he could not bear the thought of her marrying at all. James saw that Brownrigg was not satisfied, and stood like a culprit ; and Brownrigg, who had seated himself in his arm-chair, kept smoothing down the elbow of it, and seemed to be casting up the sum total of poor James's gains. " Well, Sir, I should like to have a little conversation with Peggy ; if I find the girl's heart at all in the business, Jonathan Brownrigg is not a man to consider himself, and make others unhappy." It was well for James that he had learnt in the Christian school the best of all lessons, submission, and what in reality was an exercise of a religious nature, Brownrigg supposed to be respectful obedience to his will. This certainly gratified him, and went further towards obtaining his consent than any thing James could have said, and

from that day the good-natured bachelor was contriving what he could do to make the young people happy. Many schemes passed through his mercantile mind, and were rejected as soon as formed. At length he determined to inquire for a little maid to be trained for his own convenience; and he looked for a little ground for a nursery garden, for the benefit of the young people. "A nursery garden is the most natural means for their subsistence; James understands it," said he, "and among us we might support him;" and from this time Brownrigg kept his eye upon any little freehold land that he could purchase. Now, though this interrupted his happiness in one case, yet it was a continual source of amusement for him. Plans of various kinds, which he formed to serve Peggy, and not to injure Esther; the continual activity of his mind, the repeated walks he took, and the inquiries he made in every direction, whose field that was, awakened curiosity in many parts of the parish, and in none more than in the minds of his amiable friends the Miss Jennings's. "Oh! so the old gentleman is going to marry at last some fine London lady, I suppose; whoever it was, she would have a fine life of it with Mr. Buckram." Young Mr. Jennings heard that

he counted the threads of his wristband, that it might fit him exactly; and Miss Louisa said, she saw him cutting out his own linen. "Well now, Louisa, " did you really?" said her brother; "well, that is a good one." Miss Louisa declared she did.

Now, reader, it is very true that Brownrigg was cutting a strip of cloth: as Miss Louisa passed the window one day, he was trying to bind a book, and this strip was to put at the back. It is no uncommon thing to see false conclusions drawn from slighter premises; but the good man went on heedless of any remark, and at length succeeded in the purchase of five acres not very far from his own dwelling. This he determined to let at a reasonable rent, payable to himself for his life, and afterwards for the sole and separate use of his little niece Jemima; the rent was so moderate for the first five years, that he did not get interest for his money, because he wished the young folks to get forward. After this term, he settled that it should be raised according to its value.

This settlement for James and Peggy seemed to please every one, and it certainly gave new life to Brownrigg. The purchase of the land secured, he was turning all his thoughts to the elevation of a

neat small green-house with a cottage adjoining, fully at liberty to watch his work-people; after having laid his plans, and consulting every work, new and old, published on the subject. Small as the place was, it abounded with conveniences: one thing alone seemed to fidget Brownrigg. James did not know Latin, and this he ought to know, in order to understand his plants. For several days he was casting about how to supply this defect. As James was Mr. Lascelles's servant, he thought he would consult with him upon the subject, and he suggested a plan which delighted Brownrigg: it was this; that the little Meredith should be sufficiently instructed in this language to supply James's deficiency; "and, after a time," said Mr. Lascelles, "who knows but the fair boy may become a nurseryman too."

It may be remembered how sedulously Stephen's father cultivated the level Bit, and there was something of the same spirit in the whole family. This rising lad was delighted with the idea of his own consequence, and was often by the side of Brownrigg at the new building. Oh, if there were but one spirit in us all, a spirit active and benevolent, desirous to do good, and pleased with promoting the happiness of others, performing every act of

useful life under the blessing of God our Saviour ; even this fallen world hath many chosen spots, where we might raise our Ebenezers, and sing praises to his name.

We should not have dwelt upon this apparently immaterial part of our story, were it not to note what often occurs in the order of divine Providence, viz. small circumstances forming links in the great chain. Here was Ferguson, Brownrigg, James, and even the little Michael Meredith, all necessary actors in the scene ; but the grand and most delightful part was, the frequent intercourse of Brownrigg and Mr. Lascelles, an intercourse which removed his prejudice, yet strengthened his attachment, and made him listen to his instructions with partiality, and even delight. When the house was nearly finished, “ My dear mother,” said Esther, one day, “ did you observe how my beloved uncle seemed rivetted in his attention last Sunday. Oh, if he should become a Christian ! ” “ He will,” said her aunt, “ rely upon it, Jonathan Brownrigg is not far from the kingdom of God. Remember, child, how many hands are lifted up for him daily ; I pray for him and your mother, and do not you ? ” “ Indeed, aunt, I do.” “ And to whom do we pray, my dear child ? to a God who

heareth prayer, to whom all flesh shall come."

In this delightful train, circumstances led on, and all that Brownrigg saw, and all that he heard, increased his admiration, and taught him to value the principles from which such consistent conduct flowed.

It was on the evening of a most glowing day, and when the sun seemed unwilling to quit the horizon, and left its richest tints on the surrounding scene, that Brownrigg lingered later than usual at the fire-side of his sisters. "Why, my good old women," said he; they waited, as this was commonly the prelude to something kind, they would not anticipate or break in upon him. After a considerable pause, clapping his hand upon the shoulder of Margaret, he said, "What would you say, if your old obstinate brother was to become a Methodist, eh?" Margaret turned her head, and looking at him most benevolently, said, "Why, I should say, 'Praise the Lord, Oh, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'" "Then you may begin to say it, for I am convinced that your sentiments are the only ones that will bring a man peace at the last: they are the Bible sentiments, they are the Church

of England's sentiments, and they are mine. I have long wished to tell you, but I am a proud old fellow, and I did not like to own that I was wrong, and you were right, and *had been* for so many years." "Oh, my beloved brother," said Mary, and she rose, throwing her arms round his neck, "How does this day make my existence doubly sweet to me. Very dear, very pleasant art thou to me, my brother Jonathan." And they all three wept together; and from that day it may be said they were of one heart and of one mind. They continued going to the temple, eating their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and in favour with all the people.

How this delighted the heart of the good rector it may easily be conceived; he went on (silently) his way, watching one and another, pointing out a false step there, encouraging the weak believer, while, with those more advanced, more firmly established, he was stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance. Time seemed to wing more swiftly with him as he advanced, and he felt that for him it was important to gather up every remnant, that nothing might be lost. His dear children were answering all his wishes, they were beginning to visit the

poor, especially the sick; they were watching the schools, and advancing every plan established by their excellent parents. In fine, as their activity must naturally relax, it seemed likely to be supplied by the attention and willingness of these rising dear ones; who, though fit for any society, however polished, were ready to be all things to all men, so that they might win some. How much it were to be wished, that all the daughters of our clergy were thus trained to walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless.

It was on a warm summer's evening that James Brown, passing the corner of the green lane, had shaken hands, and said, "Good night, Peggy." When he thought, "well, I will walk up to the Brow, and will call upon my old friend." It was true, Brownrigg was extremely kind, but his kindness was on Peggy's account, and his uncle was too old to afford him any counsel or consolation, and the poor fellow seemed for the first time in want of some one on *his* side to say, "James Brown is an honest lad, and worthy of Peggy." Michael most kindly entered into his feelings; but their conversation will best explain.

Esther was at work; Michael was sitting by her, amusing his little ones with

pictures in an old Bible, and telling them the history of Joseph and his brethren ; when James entering, stroked the little girl's head, and looking earnestly at her father, said, " I am come to spend an hour with you." Rose soon came in to put the young things to bed, and they sat for some moments in silence. " I think," said James, " I think I have had this stick fifteen years."

Michael. It is nothing but a bit of hazel.

" It is such an old friend ; it was with this very switch I was cutting off the head of a nettle, when you persuaded me not to go that Sunday to Mrs. Priddle's. How many things have passed since that time. You were going to the Valley, Michael. Poor old master was alive then ; you know you went away, and I got into a scrape with those gypsies. Surely God has been very good to me ; I do not think I would part with this stick for the lord mayor's gold-headed cane." Michael and Esther both looked at him with love and admiration, as they listened to this recital of his feelings. " Your uncle is uncommon kind to me," addressing Esther, " and I am continually obliged to say it and to feel it ; but I seem to stand alone in the world, and want some one to say, ' Jem Brown is not an ungrateful

man.” “ I have said *that*, my dear fellow, over and over again, and Mr. Brownrigg does not need the assurance, for he has a very good opinion of you.” “ Well, I am very glad of it; but you do not know what it is, Michael, to have to say, ‘ Thank you, thank you,’ and have nothing to offer in return.” “ No, you need not say that, James, for you offer an honest hand and heart; and if my uncle is to let you ground, you labour for the fruit of it,” said Esther. James seemed relieved. Every generous bosom will feel for Jem, and every Christian will acquit him, under that declaration of our Lord, “ It is more blessed to give than to receive.” But however he might feel, we must say, that Brownrigg, his benefactor, never thought of the favour he was conferring: he was concerned for Peggy’s happiness as for a child of his own. But for any benefit he was conferring, it raised none but pleasurable sensations in his mind, and he did not for a moment consider James his debtor. This honest man had truly a great mind; he certainly was peculiar, but it was the peculiarity of an isolated being; in short, he was an old bachelor, had a place for every thing, and every thing in its place; and if his temper was sometimes ruffled, it arose from

the conviction that his own plans were right, and he did not like to have them deranged. The only really blameable part of his character had been his prejudice against true religion—that was now removed, and he seemed likely to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour. We cannot hope that he has many years to continue, but we venture to predict that his remaining course will shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. One sweet evidence of his sincerity was the concern he felt for others. No sooner did the glow of genuine piety warm his own bosom, no sooner did he see the gulf from which he had been delivered, but his heart yearned over all whom he knew. He thought of Mrs. Tucker, his friendly old neighbour; even Mrs. Potter shared his care;—he wished he could see her, he wished he could persuade her, poor thoughtless creature, and he felt that he had passed from death unto life, by the glowing principle of love which warmed his bosom.

“ This is the grace that lives and sings,
When faith and hope shall cease;
'Tis this shall strike our joyful strings
In the sweet realms of bliss.”

About this time, nearly a fortnight after James Finch arrived at the Brow on one

of his accustomed visits, he received a letter from his sister Jemima; and as we know our readers are partial to this amiable young woman, we do not scruple to give a copy :

“ My dear James.

“ I do sadly miss you, and next to the pleasure of having you with me, will be that of hearing from you ; and I write, as I promised you, the very first leisure moment. You will be concerned to hear that Mr. Cooper has been very ill, and my dear mother is constantly with him, endeavouring all she can to relieve Mrs. Cooper from the fatigue of nursing, which is still very great. You know the sweet natural temper of all parties, and you will feel for me, when I tell you how continually my dear mother keeps dwelling on Mr. Cooper’s virtues, how fit he is for heaven ; and if *he* is not fit to go to heaven, she cannot see who should. I did venture yesterday to say, ‘ Oh, my dear mother, it costs more to redeem our souls ; we must let that alone ;’ and she is continually saying, ‘ Pure religion and undefiled before God, is this—to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.’ ‘ Well, if any one ever did this, Mr. Cooper

has.' ' Indeed he has, my dear mother,' was my reply. ' Well, child, and yet you do not seem satisfied.' I was constrained to reply, and I only said, ' My dear mother, I love Mr. Cooper, and am under the greatest obligations to him, for he has been most kind both to you, to James, and to every body.' ' Well, child.' ' And yet, my dear mother, Mr. Cooper needs an atonement for his own sins ; the blood of Christ can alone cleanse him.' ' Well, child, I know that ; who denies that ?' ' My dear mother, you dwelt so much upon his good works, that I thought you fancied that they could save him.' ' Well, child, and do you think he could be saved if he did not do good works ?' I ventured again : ' My dear, kind, excellent mother, do not be angry with me, but these works must be the fruit of his faith, not the foundation of his hope.' Like Nehemiah, I prayed to the God of heaven, and I said, ' All our righteousness are as filthy rags, we must be clothed with a better righteousness, my dear mother.' I took the Bible out of my pocket, and I read with some emphasis that portion, the marriage feast and the address. ' Friend, how comest thou here, not having a wedding garment ?' When I came to ' bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer

darkness,' I saw the colour rise in my dear mother's face, and she turned away, whether convinced or angry I know not; but I ventured yet further, and read that portion where our Lord says, publicans and harlots should enter the kingdom of heaven before Pharisees. I then kissed our dear parent, saying, ' Oh, my precious mother, never would your own Jemima thus talk to you, thus run the risk of offending you, if she did not love you most tenderly.' Dear creature, she kissed me, and went out of the room without speaking one word. I have often thought, my dear James, that our mother is not so prejudiced as she was; it is true, she never invites me to talk, but she is less offended certainly with any thing I say, and seems to consider it more, and I cannot but hope that the number of persons she sees walking consistently will do away her prejudices, and bring her to the foot of that cross where all sin was atoned for, and the work of salvation completed. You left your pocket Bible under the head of your bed, I shall take the greatest care of it, but not send it you for fear of accidents. Williamson sends you his duty; Ellen Meredith is in service at the next village, I am happy to say, in a quiet amiable family. She is so very handsome, that it

requires care where she is placed, and one or two families have declined her services because they had sons. I do most sincerely hope we shall be able now to establish her permanently; she makes herself so very useful with her needle, that in a large family she is a treasure. I write thus much about her, because I think her brother Mr. Meredith was looking out, and to prevent his taking unnecessary trouble. Her father and mother are going on as respectably as ever; I sometimes call and sit half an hour, and though, poor things, as yet they seem in darkness, there is something so beautiful in the order of their household, that I cannot help admiring and liking them, and hoping that they are not far from all we wish them.

God bless you, my dear James, make the most of your privileges; I long to see you, and yet I am delighted to have you where you are, under the eye of so kind a friend, and more especially under such a powerful and active ministry.

Believe me, your most faithful and affectionate sister
JEMIMA FINCH."

It was about this time that poor Mary Humphries was afflicted with a serious illness, and the heart of her duteous daughter was pierced most deeply; but by good

medical attendance, and the constant watchings of her darling child, and prayer for the blessing of heaven, she was restored to her usual measure of health. Just at this time, by one of those fortuitous circumstances which sometimes involve serious consequences, Esther was passing by the dairy, where Michael was talking to Betty Smith, and she heard her say, "Why no, Sir, to be sure; but then I thought you would not make objections." "I never object to any thing reasonable, Betty, but it has gone on so long." Now Esther hated the post of a listener, but she could not think what had gone on so long; and a thought struck her, whether it was the illness of her mother which had occasioned the observation. It went to her heart to believe it, that her dear husband, so good, so generous and noble, should speak on the subject to Betty Smith; and she had nearly rejected the thought, when Betty came in, saying, "What be we to carry down to-day, Ma'am;" and Esther fancying she saw something peculiar in her manner could not help being persuaded that it related to the constant attendance that had been given, and the good things sent to her mother; yet she could scarcely believe it, and she was on the point of asking what

it was, when Betty's peculiar manner of "Very well, Ma'am," and leaving the room, stopped the inquiry.

None but very timid people, exactly Esther's character, can conceive how very difficult it is, when suspicion has once glanced over the mind, to dissipate the gloom it occasions. Esther looked pained and discontented, and remained silent; but she was not silent in prayer, never did she pray more earnestly. Michael was vexed at her reserve, he could not comprehend it; he saw something was wrong, and could not conceive why that wrong should not be communicated. At length, after two days of grief and wonder, the following conversation took place between them. The chapter that morning pointed to the infirmities of Christians, and the necessity of one bearing with another. Esther was much affected, and even wept; and after the servants had gone about their usual business, and they were left alone, she had the courage to take his hand, and owned she had been grieved about something "I knew it; but about what, my love? Why did you not speak?" And when she told him what had been her suspicion, and what had grieved her, he looked at her with a degree of astonishment

which convinced her she was mistaken. "The dear old Christian, that I should grudge any thing for her. Oh, Esther, you wrong me sadly," and it was some time ere she could bring him to contemplate the suspicion with composure. "We have been too happy, my love, the enemy of souls has envied our christian union; but never again, my dear Esther, suffer your mind to indulge so injurious a thought. No, let me entreat you, if any thing painful arises, speak to me directly. Do not suffer the imagined grievance to gain strength by delay: but Betty Smith must explain this, my dear Esther." So Esther, though she was really ashamed to acknowledge her thoughts to Betty, suffered Michael to call her; and after he had left the room, she enquired, "Can you remember, Betty, what it was when you were standing in the dairy with your master—what it was you were speaking of?" "Why, let me see, Ma'am; when was it, I am sure I don't know.—Oh dear, Ma'am, now I remember. Do you remember, Ma'am, that boy that went to master's quick? Oh no, Ma'am, that was before you married; I minds it well, it is now three months, I think, since that boy cut his hand, and master desired his mother to come every

day for a slice of bread and butter and a cup of milk. So every day that little girl comes with her basin for the milk, and the plate for her bread and butter; and it had gone on so long, that I thought it was time she should give over. But then again, if master did not mind, and mistress did not name it, I would not be their hindrance. So I said to master one day. ‘ Sir, there’s that boy you allows the bread and butter to, I think it’s nigh time they gave over sending; and yet, Sir, if you wishes, I am sure I would not make any objection.’ ‘ Why no, Betty, it has gone on so long, so very long.”’ “ Dear me,” said Esther, “ how could I be so foolish.” “ What, Ma’am.” “ Oh, Betty, it is no matter, only I have been very foolish.” Betty, seeing her mistress did not intend to explain, walked away; and now Esther gave up to the regret which naturally filled her bosom, that she should for *one moment* indulge a suspicion of so kind and generous a character as Michael. She was bowed with concern that the weakness of her temper should have manifested itself in so ungenerous a manner. “ Never, never again will I indulge a suspicion, only forgive me this once, my dear kind friend; and do thou, O Lord, pardon me.” And while she was thus speaking, her

little wild girl ran in, in all the glow of health.

“ Oh, mammy, oh mammy, you cry, you cry ;” for this was the endearing title with which this infant addressed her mother. When Michael came in, she said, “ My dear, how near I have been to all that is wrong.”

“ Say no more of it, my dear Esther, only let it be a lesson to us both never to doubt each other again.”

With this resolve they separated to their various duties. It may be supposed, that this little disagreement lessened their high opinion of each other; but no, it made them watchful at those avenues where sin enters, and as it was the first, so it was the last cloud which ever shadowed their happiness.

The plans in Mr. Lascelles's village, especially that of the flax-spinners, had gained its highest point of excellence, and there was not a poor person in the village but had home-spun linen of their own, strong, neat, and decent: they were long ere they needed a darn, though at first it wanted whiteness. I dwell upon this, because I think decent appearance among the poor is often helpful to good morals. When they once reach that point of depression and indifference which beggars and

gypsies, and trampers, and that low train of mendicants which may be called the houseless poor, adopt, they are not far from vice. The very inactivity of such a state leads gradually to immorality. Those who respect not themselves rarely respect others, and the very extreme indifference to appearance meets the extreme care of it, and confirms the old adage, that extremes are dangerous.

Michael was passing through all the offices in his parish, and fulfilling them all under the influence of that text, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it heartily." As churchwarden, he was particularly careful of the neatness and cleanliness of his church. It had been a rule to have the windows cleaned once a year, and a glazier was hired for the purpose, and this cost the parish nearly a pound, as it was lit in many corners, being an old-fashioned place. Michael proposed that each farmer should spare a man to clean one window, and so gradually get the whole done, and this once a quarter; he stood by himself at the operation, that he might see the ladder fixed to prevent breaking; and now, instead of the clouds that hung over the house of prayer, all was neat, clean, and pleasant. He had determined, should any pane be broke, he himself would stand

to the expense; but this was a measure which delighted the whole parish, the change which cleanliness effects is so visible, that it is readily felt and acknowledged, more especially when it saves the pocket, as it did in this instance; and Michael took an opportunity, while he watched the fellows, (who were the class employed in this service,) to say some word of the pleasure and the honour of any way contributing to the decent worship of God. "We should be ashamed to have our own houses dirty, and surely we should pay this respect to that place where we assemble to seek favours at his hand, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain." This little plan of Michael's gave him an opportunity of saying a word to those whom otherwise he would never have known; and in all these addresses, he lifted up his heart, and said, "Strengthen me this once, I pray thee."

Every little repair was attended to; the fastenings on the pews; if any of the hassocks were worn and littering, he called upon the proprietors, and begged they would be so kind as to have them mended; the walls were regularly swept down once a month, and during Michael's churchwardenry, Westrip gave up his clerkship. James Brown applied for it,

and was appointed ; and these good young men went willingly hand in hand, delighted in the promotion of every thing that is good and excellent. But no office gave him so much trouble as surveyor of the roads, and in this he was obliged to influence others by the power of example. He performed all his statute work with a scrupulous fidelity, and he found all the farmers were performing more than they had ever done in a former year : some of them were obliged by the statute to give ninety teams, and though they would pretend to acquit themselves of this engagement, it was so imperfectly done as not to be worth thirty. He proposed that they should all combine to bring a given quantity together, and they had a sort of gala day for the road mending. “ Let us do our part thoroughly,” was his proposal, “ and instead of throwing the materials into the pit, let us thoroughly clear it ; and then, gentlemen, if you please, you will bring us your stores all together.” By these means, putting his whole strength into it, and never suffering a rut to remain unfilled, keeping all the ditches open ; by means of fair words and good example, he left the roads in perfect repair when he went out of office. He was succeeded by Mr. Henry Jennings, who very ungene-

rously observed, " I think, gentlemen, last year you had a sixpenny rate made for your roads, but you see I have brought you through without any additional expense." " Ah, Mr. Jennings, this will not do, this must not pass," said one of the farmers; " in what state did you find the roads? For my part," said this honest farmer, " if Mr. Kemp would be content, I would make him surveyor for ever. I like my money as well as any man, Sir, and I am sure Mr. Kemp did not lay out an unnecessary shilling." " You are right, Mr. Sturges," said old Jennings. " No, no, give every dog his due," and the worthy assembly laughed at Mr. Jennings's wit, and we may safely add, Mr. Jennings laughed with them.

We have said that Michael was churchwarden, and the year we have spoken of he was parishwarden; and in this parish, as in many others, the warden for the parish and that of the clergyman perform different services, taking care that each had their rights. Thus, for instance: when he became Mr. Lascelles' warden, he turned his particular care to his convenience; he engaged the grave-digger, for a small sum, to keep every little mound in the nicest order; and at the suggestion of the youngest Miss Las-

celles, who was passionately fond of ivy, and the whole tribe of creeping plants, he planted ivy all round the low wall of the church-yard; and as the little Michael Meredith had heard the story how uncle Michael used to sweep the paths at P—, this sweet boy was often found with his basket picking off the dead leaves and watering the fresh shoots by the side of Miss Lascelles; and how delighted the warm-hearted Fanny would be, when her dear boy seemed treading in the steps of his uncle, we can hardly tell the reader. Let those who have young ones accustom them to hear all interesting anecdotes of their religious friends, and even their early infant habits; but let them beware how they talk of sin, especially if that sin be accompanied by wit, cunning, and childish contrivance to cheat or deceive. These are winged seeds, which are sown by every highway-side; they need no culture, they ask no care, they, alas! but too well accord with the soil found in every heart. It was found that the books at church were much worn; Michael proposed new ones. Mr. Lascelles observed very sensibly and very kindly, “I must be careful that you are not too good to me, lest your kind consideration should bring you into disgrace. You have given me a new sur-

plice, you have taken the ragged lining out of my desk, and made me very clean and neat. No, I will wait till next year for my prayer-book." Michael saw and felt the kindness of this, and was not sorry, upon reflection, to avoid doing more, lest they should think him partial and prodigal. But there was one step which he took, attended with more difficulty than every other: it was the prevention of the number of persons usually assembling in the belfry; this had grown and increased. It is true that they were not noisy, as in some churches, but still there was bustle, and talk, and irreverence. One point Mr. Lascelles had gained, they no longer sung those frightful old tunes, anthems of a quarter of an hour, every one bawling, and all in a different key, and consequently the idle conversation in the singing gallery was stopped. But still this little party in the belfry thickened and increased, and the good rector, who was as remote from tyranny as may be conceived, was at a loss how to stop it. He knew, that till a better principle was imparted than he could give them, this evil must remain, unless some one in the parish who had power would assist him. Michael had felt, and determined to remedy this evil; he began thus: he went up to a

new lad, "My good young man, you live with Mr. Stukeley, I think? You do not know your pew, I will shew you." The lad looked sheepish, and bowed, and followed Michael. To another, "James, Thomas, had you not better go to your seat, Mr. Lascelles will be in presently." To a third, "I do not think your master would like to see you stand talking here." Then turning to the ringers, "You do not want these young men?" "Oh dear, no, Sir," winking and laughing at each other.

The business was done for this Sunday, but the next it was all to do again. Michael stood quietly, but spoke not; the assembly were hushed, but they moved not. There was somewhat of that sturdy rebellion which John Bull is subject to, when he fancies his right invaded. Sunday after Sunday they were assembled in the same manner, and Michael proceeded in the same quiet way. Brownrigg was so fidgetted, that he longed to put down this persevering impudence with a high hand. Michael begged that he would not, and with difficulty succeeded. There was his erect form constantly in the pew, leering round to see what progress poor Michael made in the belfry; while Esther sat pale, trembling, and terrified. At

length, stirred to it by his young master, Mr. Jennings's carter, looking Michael steadily in the face, asked him if he should shew him his pew? To this our excellent young farmer hardly knew how to reply; and at length determined that there was dignity in silence; this he had often heard good Mr. Walker say, and this he found very salutary counsel, had he spoken under the impression of displeasure, he might not have spoken wisely; so he stood still till the service was over; then requesting a word with old Mr. Jennings, he stated the difficulty he had to preserve order, and his own conviction that Mr. Jennings wished it as well as himself, and requested it as a favour that he would speak to his carter upon the impropriety of his conduct that day. This slight compliment to Mr. Jennings, together with the mild address had its desired effect; and Jennings spoke with decision to his servant. His son was not so tractable; he observed, that "the governor (a name which he chose to give Michael) was a hard master; there was but one day in the week in which poor people might have a little pleasure, and in that day they were to be kept in order by Mr. Kemp. For his part, he loved to see them cheerful and happy; Mr. Kemp wanted to make them all as

sour and melancholy as himself." Old Jennings grew angry. "Harry Jennings, say what you will, Kemp is a good man, such a man as you would do well to imitate. I do not think any family in this parish is better governed, if so well; and it is but reasonable to say, that we ought not to go to church to laugh and talk. I wish you may make as good a master of a family, if ever you have one."

This point was completely gained; after a few more Sundays all was tranquil in the belfry, and it was not long before every trace of resentment was lost, and the common people went to their pews in the same orderly manner as their superiors.

The poverty of the Jennings's was coming on them like an armed man; the landlord seized for rent, every thing was to be sold, and this numerous family knew not what to do, or where to go. It was now that the Christians shone in native splendour, while the neighbours contented themselves, some of them saying, "Ah, poor man, I thought he was coming down;" others, with less pity, said, "it was what was to be expected, and what they all deserved, proud creatures as they were."

Michael went every day to talk to the old man, to consult what might be done,

and, if possible, prevail upon the creditors to assist in some way to provide for the old people. There was something due to himself, and about this he shewed the greatest kindness, trusting old Jennings when no one else would; and as for Esther, she would go to see the poor old woman, who was full of weakness and weeping, and talking about their being so come down; grieving that her daughters must work like poor people, never once glancing at her own imprudence, or regretting that they had been brought up beyond their means. But Esther's quiet good sense taught her that this was not a time to speak of what was wrong; no, she only soothed, patiently heard all the weak complaints, persuaded her to go out to take a little air. "Oh yes, mamma," said Tiny, "let the people see you are not afraid to be looked at. I think Mrs. Kemp is very right in that particular." "I think so too," said Miss Jennings; "there be some who like to see their betters come down; for my part, I would rather break than bend." The meek Esther could only look her disapprobation; but one day, when Michael was present, and these young ladies were saying something to the same effect, he observed, "that it became us to inquire whose hand was

upon us ; if it was God's, surely we should bend under ; that resistance was vain. What said our Saviour to Saul, ' it is hard for thee to kick against the goad.' Do not you remember, madam," turning to Mrs. Jennings, " what a fine sermon Mr. Lascelles gave us upon that text?" " Oh no, Sir," said Mrs. Jennings, " I never had a good memory, and since my troubles, what I have suffered has quite darkened it ; I can hardly remember when churning day comes." " Well, madam, he said, these afflictions might be compared to the goad which drove the oxen to the path of duty ; that if resisted, they only became more painful ; if yielded to, we learned wisdom by what we suffered—" " Dear me," said Miss Tiny, " what a fine memory you have, Sir," glancing slightly at her sister. Michael had but one end in view, Esther the same, to be useful to these people. Not all their sneers, their stupidity and ingratitude, awakened any sensation but of pity ; and as the nice young creatures walked home together, they only observed to each other, " they feared, they greatly feared that they should not be able to be of much use to them." " The only quiet one among them seems Amelia." " So I think," said Esther ; " she never has been taken much notice of, she

seemed attentive when you spoke." " I observed she did." " Perhaps she would not object to take a service ? Suppose you were to speak to her aside." This was done, and the despised daughter of Mr. Jennings, and the only one which the smart Mr. Henry had predicted would not be good for any thing, accepted a service in the family of a friend of Mrs. Lascelles ; she was only house-maid, for at first she had nothing but her good-will to recommend her ; but this good-will, as it always does, enabled her to perform cheerful service : she rose every day in the good opinion of her employers, who had no objection to her but her fine name ; and this was done away as soon as she informed them she had another ; and though at first she found it difficult to remember that her name was Jane, she soon became accustomed to it, and we are happy to say, during the first year of her service, sent her poor mother a nice straw bonnet made in the village school where she resided, had it neatly lined and trimmed with white ; and when the mother got it, and found folded in one of the strings a sovereign, with these words, " Accept this trifle from your dutiful child, Jane Jennings," she could only walk about and cry. But Miss Tiny, who never could let

an opportunity slip when she might be pert and saucy, "Jane Jennings, dear me," said this flippant young lady, "I suppose they think it a sin to call her by her first name;" then, taking up the bonnet in her hand, "Why, it is a tidy little concern; why, you will look almost as good as Margaret Beal, when you go to church with your bow just straight. Well, I must say Jane Jennings is greatly improved." The meek mother could only sit and cry for joy and vexation, when the father came in. "Why, wife, what is the matter?" "Why, nothing, only I have a letter and a bonnet from poor Mely." "Why, Jane, you should say," said this pert miss. "I do wish you would let me speak." "Do hold that tongue of yours, girl," said her father. The mother told her tale, and shewed the letter, the bonnet, and the sovereign; the father's heart was touched, and the parents wept together, and he faintly articulated, "These Methodists have very good methods, that I will say for them. Pray how long," said the father, "do you girls intend to be idle here?" "Oh pa," said Miss Tiny, "we only wait orders, the things Mrs. Lascelles sent us are done, and gone home." "Well, that is a beginning," said her father; "but I should think there is a good deal to

do in our own house, children ; I am sure I have not a wristband that fits me." This was an old story, and was sure to stir up disagreeable sensations ; but times were altered, and these spoiled children saw they must either work at home or go out. Mrs. Lascelles, who had considered the subject in every form, had heard that some of the warehouses in town cut out their linen, and sent dozens of different articles into the country to make ; and she thought this would be a certainty, if another employment did not come in, and she commissioned a friend in London to manage this for them. At first this was very disagreeable, but when the money came in they began to be in some degree reconciled.

The poor father had no resources, and the idle brother was lounging about, waiting for an exciseman's place, which their good-natured landlord was endeavouring to procure for him. At length he succeeded, and the overbearing young farmer went off to his new destination ; but poor old Jennings was in great danger of losing his spirits for want of some regular employment. Mr. Lascelles saw this, and was very eager, if possible, to remove it : he wrote to his landlord, asking him what he intended to do, as the farm was not yet

let. "Are you going to take it in hand, Sir? If you are, I think some employment might be found for your poor old tenant, for whatever his faults may have been, he has certainly suffered very deeply." The landlord was a good-natured man, and in former days having passed some time in the sporting season at his own estate, knew the whole family well; he considered Mr. Lascelles's kindness in the right light, and for a time made the old man his bailiff; and though he now lived in a corner of the large house, his furniture being all sold, his girls being obliged to work, and his overbearing son out of the way, his life was really happier than it ever had been; he had an active servant under him, and he made Ellen put every thing down at night, so that, though slowly and reluctantly, these young people began to do something. At first, Mrs. Lascelles found it difficult to put up with the very ordinary work of these ladies. Miss Lascelles, who was singularly delicate in all she did, would frequently unpick and new make those articles in which they had been employed. This she did quietly and good-humouredly, without any irritable feelings; but after having two or three times borne it patiently and silently, the hem of a cambric muslin dress came

home a considerable depth on one side, while on the other it was very narrow. After carefully measuring, it was found impossible to repair the damage, and a repetition of these blunders were so frequent, that at length it was concluded that they were incompetent.

Esther Kemp happened one morning to be at the Rectory, when a very nice muslin gown was sent home in this imperfect state, and she good-humouredly offered to take it to these young women, and shew them the error. At first, Miss Lascelles strongly opposed it, but her mamma, though kindness itself, thought the plan a good one, and the kind-hearted Esther went on her disagreeable commission. Miss Tiny and her sister were in their littered work-room; Miss Tiny twisting up bits of cuttings, in comical figures, and declaring that one of them was very like old Brownrigg, when Louisa exclaimed, "Why, here comes the straight forward Mrs. Kemp with a little parcel in her hand, measuring every step she takes. Tiny, will you go down and let her in?" "No, that I won't," said Tiny. So Louisa passed by, giving her sister a slap as she went. The quiet good-humoured mother was sitting below darning her husband's stockings, and rose meekly to welcome

Mrs. Kemp, and hoped she was well, and Mr. Kemp and all her family, when she heard from them. Esther asked if the Miss Jennings's were at home. "Oh yes," and she went to call them. "My dear Louisa, here is Mrs. Kemp called to see you." "Oh yes, mother, I saw Mrs. Kemp coming up the serpent-twining walk. Good morning, madam," said Miss Louisa, with one of her easy bends, "beautiful weather," and she threw herself carelessly back with one arm hanging over a chair, the finger and thumb of the other hand placing a curl which had strayed too far on her really fair forehead. "You have been taking a pleasant stroll, I suppose?" "I have not been far, only to the Rectory; and Miss Jennings, I have brought you this robe of the youngest Miss Lascelles, and a pattern, and a piece more muslin. You must be so good as to unpick it, for it will not do any way. I shall be very willing to help you to alter it, and any thing I can do at any time I beg you will permit me." The fair brow of the lady lowered, the colour mounted to her cheek, she looked indignant, muttered a reluctant "Thank ye," with "Oh no, on no account; I was never brought up to study people's whims and fancies, was I, mamma? Papa never contra-

dicted me." "No, my dear," said Mrs. Jennings, winking; "but you must expect, Louie, that such gentlefolks as Mrs. Lascelles should be particular. I have heard, I don't know that it is true, that Mrs. Lascelles's relations are lords and dukes. Do you know, madam?" turning to Esther. She could only declare she did not, and sat with the work in her hand, waiting for Miss Jennings to receive it, which this young lady at length did most reluctantly, pulling it this way and that, saying she wondered what was the matter. "Well now, Louie, my dear, do not put yourself in a flurry." "A flurry indeed, how odd you are, mother; it would puzzle Mrs. Lascelles to put me in a flurry, I have been too much used to their whims." Poor Esther was really frightened, and could only continue offering her good services. But the frequent errors of Miss Jennings soon convinced Mrs. Lascelles she never could make mantuamakers of them, and their high spirits prevented their improvement: they could not receive reproof, they expected every one to come forward with some wonderful exertion of kindness, while they made no effort to deserve that kindness, and they were perpetually raving at the world, and

saying, when they were in prosperity, how kind *they* were.

One day, when they were running on in this foolish strain, the father said, "Kind, aye, very kind to yourselves; I think I never heard of any of you going to visit a sick neighbour, making any thing for the poor, like Mrs. Meredith; nice active young creature, there she is with her four children, with only a little girl to help her, always cheerful, and contriving to help others." "Dear me," said Miss Tiny, "I have been told that Mr. Stephen is as handy as a maid, knows exactly how long a piece of pork should be roasted, and commonly sees to the boiling of the potatoes." "Suppose he does," said the angry father, "nice young people walking hand in hand, helping one another, this is all right; every thing seems to go well with them—their pretty children, so happy and so gay, and their neat cottage so pretty, that all the gentry round come to draw it and put it on paper." "You mean to skitch it, pa," said Miss Tiny. "No matter what I mean, I mean one thing, that they are very happy and contented, they get their own living and help their parents; I mean that, miss." Thus did these misguided uncomfortable people

contrive continually to perplex and worry each other ; never did they censure themselves, but most liberally did they condemn one another. The father blamed the children for his own misconduct ; the children revolted, and thought themselves misused, and felt themselves unhappy ; nothing was right, nothing gave satisfaction ; and at length Miss Tiny, going to a neighbouring fair, drinking tea with some slight acquaintance, got acquainted with a corporal of a marching regiment who had a good person, and was in favour with his captain ; and Miss Tiny thought he was in the road for a commission himself, and we think it very probable he held out something of the kind as an inducement to this ambitious young lady, for she was often heard talking of army, rank, &c. to which she had fixed no other idea than that it was something high, but she did not know what. However, the poor old folks never heard of it till the son-in-law came on the bridal morning to beg papa and mamma's blessing. He was a dashing looking fellow, and hope visited the bosom of the mother, though the poor father looked upon all the tale of promotion as mere deception, and said they had stuck another nail in his coffin.

Miss Louisa was now left alone with

her dull sister Eleanora Frances, and as Miss Tiny had rather piqued her pride to be the first of the family who settled in life, she began to turn her thoughts seriously to provide for herself; and one day, looking over the newspaper, she saw an advertisement for an active young person to serve in a haberdasher's shop, and that if they were steady and gave satisfaction, salary would not be an object. As it was somewhere near Walworth, it struck her that the old prig, as she always called Mr. Brownrigg, might be of some use to her; so she went to the Brow to talk about it. Esther, who was glad to oblige any one, undertook to speak to her uncle, and he knew the place well, and offered to write for her, and we are really glad to say that the situation was secured; and though at first she found some difficulties, she had sense enough to try to overcome them, and the last we heard of her was, she made herself useful, and got on pretty well. I really have been too long with these people, but if my young readers learn that such high-blown expectations must vanish, as baseless and irrational, I have not recorded in vain the history of the Jennings' family; the only being that remained to comfort her parents was the dull plodding Eleanora

Frances, who, when she had no longer sisters at home to mislead her, went on steadily, and was really a comfort to her poor father and mother. Yet still, as might be expected, these weak people would sometimes fondly dwell on those days when Louie and Tiny were the admiration of the squire, and when the Jennings's family made no mean figure at church on Sunday; and when Miss Louisa took a walk in the park arm in arm with a neighbouring shopman, she generally amused him with descriptions of her father's fine horses, and how often she had joined the hunt to the admiration of the neighbouring gentry. Poor Tiny's regiment was ordered to the West Indies, and this unhappy young creature closed her eyes there, having caught the fever almost immediately on her landing.

It may not be displeasing to the reader to learn, that James Brown's affairs went on happily, and one feature in the character of this good lad we take pleasure in recording: the preparations of his own settlement in life never interfered with his duties as a servant; the Rectory garden was cultivated even with more care than usual, and when Mr. Lascelles paid his last wages, he told him that he did not expect to replace him. "You have been

a very faithful excellent servant to me, James ;” and he replied, “ I am sure you have been the very kindest master to me, Sir.” There was no want of young gardeners. Stephen Meredith’s brother Frank was about nineteen, and had been well trained at the Level Bit, and was delighted to see the world, and to come and live near his great relations, as he always called them ; and Stephen was happy to shew them any kindness that laid in his power, for he loved his family ; and though he said little of it, had been greatly disappointed not to get his dear Ellen a service ; and as it was never explained to him, he had feared that Mr. Lascelles had some prejudice against him, and that his request had never been attended to ; and was somewhat surprised when he inquired for Frank, and expressed a desire to receive him into his family. And as Michael was now settled, and had openly spoken of the affair to Stephen, these happy brothers understood each other, and every shade of caprice or unkindness was removed from the character of Mr. Lascelles. Frank was very different from Stephen, more enterprising, and though not unsteady, not so easily governed, something like Jem Brown, but he had never suffered as Jem had ; therefore, when he came under the

guidance of old Andrew, the stiff Scot began to doubt whether he and the young Frank could remain long together. But good advice and firm resolves on the part of Stephen to send him home, if he gave the slightest trouble to the old gardener, made Frank consider his way. And one evening, when he had strolled down to see his brother and sister, with the baby on his shoulder, walking up and down the room, "You have no notion, sister, what a tiresome old man that Andrew is, so abominably obstinate, I believe he thinks—" and as he was going on, Stephen stopped him. "It is your place to obey him, Frank, and it is only upon those terms that you can keep your place. I would not have a brother of mine give trouble in Mr. Lascelles's family." "But when I know," said Frank, "that the way my father has taught me is the best way, is it not provoking that this old man will not allow me to know any thing, and is always calling me a boy." Here the good-humoured Fanny rose. "My dear Frank, it is so natural to call things what they are." Here the family party was increased by the entrance of James Brown; and Stephen appealed to him, to know if Andrew was really a tiresome old man. "He is slow, partial to his own way." "That

he is *indeed*," said Frank. "But he is an excellent gardener, and in all the time that I have lived with Mr. Lascelles, he has been very kind to me, and I have constantly found that experience qualified him to direct me, and I never found it difficult to obey." "Do you hear that, Frank?" said Stephen; and James looked round, as though he would have said, "Have *you* found it difficult?" Frank understood the appeal, and said, "Perhaps, Mr. Brown, you may be of a milder temper than I am;" and as soon as this escaped him he seemed sorry that he had said it, and went on. "I am sure I have done all I could to please him." Frank had given the babe to his sister, and was leaning over the back of Jem's chair, declaring that he was sure, he was certain he had done all he could; and James, who in days lang syne, would have been quite of Frank's mind, and would have thought it impossible to bear with an obstinate old man, turned round, and looking him full in the face, said, "My dear fellow, I have lived so long with Andrew, that I know him exactly; he will not yield to you, he will not think it proper, and I must say that every one who considers, will think him better qualified to govern than a young lad like you. You cannot,

Frank, speak to any one who better understands the pride of the heart than I do. I have had plenty of it here," said James, striking his hand upon his bosom; "and if Mr. Kemp were here, he could tell you so. Jem Brown was a wild slip; but in all the pride of my heart, when I got my own way to the uttermost, I was never so happy as when I conquered myself, and bowed my proud spirit to obedience. No, my dear lad, I know just what you feel: just entering on life, in all the vigour of youth, you think it is your turn to govern, and Andrews to retire. But while his master sees fit to retain him, and while he is capable of fulfilling the duties of his place, the struggle is vain; you must either give up or go. But oh," said this nice young man, "how glad I should be, Frank Meredith, if you could think as I do, without the sin, the sorrow, and the suffering that has brought me to think thus; I do so love your brother." "Thank you," said Fanny, "thank you, dear James." "And again thank you," said Stephen. "I do so love your brother, that I should be glad to see you reap the fruit without the trouble of digging and watering." "I do not think it would be good for much," said Stephen. "Now hear me, Frank; let Andrews

guide you, go on quietly the same way that I did, and if there is any thing you can now and then just recommend to him, gently and slowly, mind you, still with submission to his opinion, I think all may yet be well. You have never come to any open quarrel, I hope." "No, not that exactly, only he told me yesterday, that he had not lived there so many years, and come all the way from Scotland to be taught by a boy." "He was perfectly right, Frank," said Stephen, "you must obey." "Oh," said James, "I wish I could prevail upon you, my good fellow, to think of these words, 'Not only to the good and gentle, but to the unthankful and evil,' we are called to obey. How that text did strike me, the first time I read it with attention." "But I cannot consider him as my master, you see; Mr. Lascelles is my master, and I look upon him as my fellow-servant." "You are in a great error then," said Stephen, "and the sooner you recover yourself the better, unless you have a mind to go back to your father." This was spoken sharply, and dear Fanny, who was always the mediator, said, "No, no, I cannot part with brother Frank, I want him."

Oh, how powerful is the spirit of kindness and love! This haughty boy, whose

rebellious heart was preparing a pert answer to his displeased brother, melted at once, muttered out that he would do what he could, and the bond between him and Fanny remained firmer from that day. He had always loved dear sister Fanny, but the kindness now was doubly felt : it came at a moment when he wanted it ; when Stephen, the brother to whom he had looked up, seemed willing to part, to send him away. It went hard with him, he took it unkind, and the ebullitions of his settling temper still uttered low murmurings of the unkindness. “ But then, Fanny, dear sister Fanny, it was worth bearing for her.”

Frank's high temper gave Stephen some anxious hours, but he did not begin to wish, like worldly people, that he had not troubled himself ; but he consulted with Michael on the right way of guiding this headstrong boy. “ I have always found,” said Michael, “ that resistance strengthens opposition, and that if you meet it with equal spirit, you injure your own temper without benefiting theirs.” “ I told him he could not keep his place,” said Stephen ; “ I should not have said that, because that is the last inconvenience ; I should endeavour to make him feel that it would make me unhappy, and would be

very painful to Fanny ; and all this, you know, is strictly true. But if, my dear fellow, a better principle should be imparted, how easy would it then be to bear the weakness of declining life, or gather that information from his experience which Andrew is both able and willing to impart."

There was one class of small dependants on the Brow Farm whom Michael found it very difficult to manage, the crowkeepers: no sooner was his back turned, than their vigilance was over, and he frequently considered the best means of correcting this defect ; and one day it occurred to him, that it was worth a little thought. Amongst children of this description employed by Michael, was Thomas Southby: he was to be in as soon as the day dawned, it was a very nice piece of wheat, and the birds were assailing it in all parts. The young watchman expected Michael ; he was there clapping and hooting with the greatest vigilance ; Michael was gone, he thought, and he was off to another part of the village. Throughout this day, himself and William at different periods visited this field ; it was at a considerable distance from the house. This young culprit thought himself safe, and until noon never entered this place, when he was greatly surprised to find William doing that busi-

ness for which he was paid ; and on Saturday, when his wages were settled, Michael sent for his father, and referring to a paper on which he had carefully noted down all the hours this boy had spent elsewhere, payed him correctly for that time and no more. At first this caused a great outcry, but when it was found that to those boys who were punctual in the field, and did their duty steadily, Mr. Kemp gave a penny a-day more and a new hat at the end of the season. It worked complete reformation.

The following year, he had a number of little crowkeepers, and Tom Southby among the rest, as watchful as the best of them. The best guide in every case is the scripture guide, and we constantly find reward offered for good conduct, and patience exercised even with the rebellious. There is no doubt that sinners will elude vigilance, and young sinners will sometimes baffle every attempt to reduce them to order ; but while mild measures may be used they are certainly best ; and though sometimes an example must be made for the terror of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well, yet I believe it is rarely found that patient enduring kindness is without its fruit. Michael found it so in his case, he never had occasion to dis-

miss a workman. Esther's influence over her poor women was as complete and full as Michael's, and if she had not as much decision as her husband, she was aware of this defect, and acted in such a manner as to conceal it—quiet perseverance in what she knew to be right. They employed very few women on the farm, at least in labour. Michael had his own ideas upon this subject, he greatly preferred performing all that could be done by men and boys; he thought it made the women masculine and careless in their family, and destroyed that feminine decency which he so loved to encourage. It is true, he had a few stone-pickers in the season, and some hay-makers, but these women were mostly in their cottages, seeing to their husbands' and children's clothes, and providing for the general comfort of the family; so that the children were well nursed, and there was an air of decency in their dwelling which cannot be preserved while the wearied wife shares the labour of the day with her stronger partner. The lyings-in were provided for, and it was a regular custom at the Brow to lend a parcel for a month, and at the end of that term, when they came to return it, to keep them to dinner, and to converse with them on the necessity of devoting

themselves anew to God, who had brought them through danger and distress, and to give them such hints as might be useful for the training of the little ones. Thus feeling they had a Friend who attended them, and had a concern for their welfare, they were brought up to look to one head, and if their mistress was ill, or if they had not seen master for a few days, there was a sort of anxiety, a tender apprehension, even among the merely moral, which proved that they were sensible of their advantages, and feared to lose them.

Madam Lascelles was as much honoured, but then she was so much above them; that they could not so freely make known all that passed to her as they could to Esther.

It was in the evening of a very fine day, that the mother of little Thomas Southby came up to return her bundle, and to offer her thanks. The poor creature sat down in the porch to rest; Esther saw the shadow of something pass the window, and partly expecting Fanny, opened the door to welcome her. "Oh, Phœbe Southby, is it you?" "Yes, madam; I beg your pardon for not coming in, but I was a little tired coming up the hill;" and Esther took the baby, who laid wrapt in sleep, unconscious of the fatigue he occasioned. Taking in the sleeping infant, and

laying it safely, she returned with a cordial for the mother; and observing that all about her wore the appearance of care and industry, she said, "How happy it is for you to have so kind a husband." "Madam, I am come to return you thanks for the nice caudle you sent me: I had it three times in the week, and I may justly say, I think it did Thomas as much good as me, for you know, madam, how poorly he was; I am sure we are bound to love you and pray for you, madam; and then the learning our children gets; why, dear me, there is my little maid, she can read and work," and she began to feel in her pocket for a cap the child had made. "The youngest Miss Lascelles gave me this muslin, and I thought I would cut it out, and see what Patty could do." "Well, this is very neat indeed, and deserves to be encouraged; send her to me to-morrow, neighbour."

It is by intimate inquiry into the minuter concerns that we bind our connexions to us; in great matters they expect to be attended to, but in smaller affairs the heart is won by seeing that you are interested; for whatever shades of difference Providence may have seen fit to make in society, still each have a tender concern and an intimate feeling of small kindnesses

shewn them in the progress of affairs in their own little circle. Thus, Esther's observance of Patty's work, and the wife's neat mending; Michael's notice of Thomas's tidy *pig-sty*, and his care to keep his windows tight, and the small bits of wood nailed upon his cottage door; all these things led them to suppose they were regarded and even beloved. Oh, the power of this kind treatment over the human bosom, all feel it—it operates delightfully, it acts and re-acts, none lose by exerting this sweet principle, it descends from heaven to man, it operates delightfully on fellow-mortals, and rises again in oblations and in praise to Him who gave the principle; 'God is love, and he who liveth in love liveth in him.'

How much do those lose who bluntly and roughly treat their fellow-creatures worse than the animals who labour for them. There was not a man upon Michael's farm who would not have risen at any hour to serve his master or mistress; for why? because he knew that that master or mistress had a concern for every creature round them; that, in imitation of their beloved Saviour, following on to know him: in all their afflictions he was afflicted, so that the common occasions of life, which in other situations were passed

by or overlooked, were here noted, observed, and shared.

There was one fixed principle in Michael's mind, never to evade taxation; for he thought, how was it possible for government to effect its measures if every puny housekeeper, who shares the privilege of peace and protection, was to be endeavouring thus to deprive government of its resources. No, he thought it was money well spent which procured every man the benefit of sitting safe under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree. This operated in every way: the sly smuggler who came with a little piece of lace, or the more open evasion of giving in fewer windows than were in your house, were equally avoided here. Every species of dishonesty or deception was looked upon as sin against God, and avoided. Esther had no desire of finery, she had been brought up in habits of prudence, and they were so natural to her, that she could never feel easy unless the principle of economy were enforced. Her example was most profitable in her household, they were ashamed to be finer than their mistress; and the dear little children, neither seeing nor hearing any thing of false taste, were contented with the plainest appearance. It was this minute attention to

trifles which gave Michael power of doing many kind actions ; and Esther was extremely careful in house expenditure ; there was a sentence frequently upon her lips, “ Plenty, but no waste ; ” — in short, Thou God, seest me. And the dear children were taught to fear daintiness — “ How many poor little creatures want what you have, Moss ; and if you take care, Jemima, I should not wonder if you might give a new frock to little Judith ; but you know your father works hard, love, and if we waste we can have nothing to give.” Now some good folks will say, how was it possible that such babies as these could understand ? But we will say of them, as it is said of the German, that they make playthings for the English children to break ; so these preserved those halfpence to make up a little store for the poor, which other children spent in trash to gratify the palate ; and we will venture to say, this kept them in better health, and they breathed an atmosphere of love and good will, and their little active powers were kept in play usefully and happily, so that they rarely suffered from that species of uneasiness called fretfulness ; and they mixed with no children but their cousins, and were not tempted with forbidden dainties nor forbidden finery.

People are little aware how children are affected by association, or how soon they long for what they see, and it is unkind to tantalize them with a prospect of enjoyment which is to be forbidden. Their greatest delight was the infant school, there they saw beings even younger than themselves busy and happy in pursuit of knowledge; they saw also necessary and wholesome correction of those faults which in so large a circle must arise, and they saw it immediately effectual in restoring good order and obedience, and if there was any thing like resistance at home, Michael would say, "I think we shall send you to the infant school:" and much as they liked to visit, they never wished to be members. Moss's chief gratification was a visit to his grandmother, who had a large old Bible, and permitted him to amuse himself by turning over the pictures and tracing the history by reading that part which related to them, and by these means they became acquainted with all the historical parts; and it was as natural to Esther to refer for examples and warnings to the sacred book, as to some mothers to utter a worldly threat, or to offer a worldly enjoyment. If they concealed a fault, she would say, "O, Moss, 'the woman whom thou gavest

to be with me.'” If they were prevaricating, “Thy servant went no whither;” and immediately the idea of Gehazi, covered with leprosy, was present to the infant imagination. If they were not kind to each other, the love of Jonathan and David; if they were envious, they were reminded, “Behold, this dreamer cometh;” and in any act where generosity was required, the conduct of Abraham to Lot, “If thou wilt go to the right, I will go to the left;” and the conduct of David to Araunah, “in all these things did David give as a king giveth to a king;” and when they were to take offerings at the church, that text, “Shall I offer unto God that which cost me nothing;” so that some little self-denial was to be practised ere they consented to permit them the gratification of bestowing. If they were confident, they were reminded of Peter; if reluctant to forgive each other, they were reminded of that injunction of our Lord, “I say not unto you seven times, but until seventy times seven.” If they looked pouting at the time of repose, it was, “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” If they were unwilling to impart their little gifts to each other, it was, “Remember, the Lord said, ‘it is more blessed to give than to receive.’” If there was any thing communicated to the dis-

advantage of another, this broad axiom, "Speak not evil one of another," stopped them; and then, for the gentleness and all the beautiful graces that adorn the christian character, they were referred to the Saviour, "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;" and then for obedience, even Jesus was subject to his parents. The Lord of life and glory, before whom nothing is pure, nothing is holy, came and dwelt among us, bore with our sins, our infirmities, and shall not we bear with one another?

Thus did these good parents train their little ones, and for moral precepts they went to the Proverbs, so abounding in wisdom. And for God's hatred of contempt for age, the awful instance of the children with Elijah made a strong impression—the bears out of the wood. Moss was a keen child; "But mother, there are no bears now in England." "But take care, Moss, how you harden your little heart. Remember Pharaoh: there are plenty of flies and frogs, besides, God says, "He that being often reprov'd, and hardeneth his neck shall be suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy." These children felt the force of these appeals, they understood them. It is impossible to ascertain how far the divine blessing might

operate upon the minds of children whose parents were walking in the fear of God, but this we can assure the reader, that neither Esther or Michael found the slightest difficulty in making their children understand all the precepts of the Scriptures, nor even the lessons which are drawn by inference, so that the common objection that they cannot understand appears to be the result of prejudice and inexperience. Not only did they comprehend what was told them, but they soon began to find out lessons for themselves. Thus, for instance: as they were walking hand in hand through the church-yard, Moss asked, turning his little head round to his father, "Whether that was not holy ground." "Yes," replied his father. What led the child to this question, was having overheard some one say, that the punishment was more severe for any abuse offered in the church-yard, because it was holy ground; and then said the little prattler, "Dada, should we not pull our shoes off as Moses did?" "There is no commandment of that sort, my dear; if God were to speak personally to us as he did to Moses, we might be commanded to act as Moses acted; he is every where—

'Not to one narrow partial spot confined.'

If you take the wings of the morning,

and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, behold he is there." The children were silenced for the time; but it was very difficult to make them believe in the presence of God, because they could not see him, and this is the difficulty that most parents will find, and every unrenewed heart will feel. But one strong lesson they were enabled to give him very shortly after this: he was exceedingly fond of tasting, and his mother had often warned him not to do this. At length one day she had mixed a small portion of calomel in red currant jelly, and while she went up stairs, Moss seeing the nice jelly at the top, took it down without once perceiving the medicine: as might be expected, he was very ill in about the course of half an hour after, and Esther, who had no idea of where the medicine went, and thought that the maids might have washed it away with the other spoons, was at a loss at first to conjecture what could be the cause of the child's indisposition. "You must have eaten something that could not be good for you, my love, tell your mother what you have eaten. I hope you and Jemima have not got at the berries in the garden." "No, no, indeed." "What have you been tasting?" She had sent for his father from the field, and at this point of the question

he entered. "Now that is my own boy, try and remember what you have eaten." He was about to bring it out with some reluctance, when the truth flashed upon Esther, and she questioned him with no hesitation to confess it.

"Now, my dear boy," said Michael, "the great and good God who loves you, saw you, though we did not; he permitted you to take this, to convince you that he is about your path, about your bed, and spieth out all your ways." "And remember, my precious dear," said Esther, "whenever you are going to do any thing which you would not wish us to see, it must be wrong; and remember these four little words, 'Thou, God, seest me.'" But this led to something awful and affecting, for the child had an undefined terror of being alone: he thought God had permitted him to take the medicine which had made him so very ill, and he could not but consider him as an angry God. Michael consulted Mr. Lascelles upon this tender point; he advised him to speak sweetly and familiarly of God reconciled to sinners through Jesus Christ; — that dear friend, who is so full of compassion and tender mercy, inviting little children to come unto him. Michael did this, he took Moss on his knee one day when he was

looking at the picture of Peter walking on the water— “ You see, my boy, Peter was afraid, and he began to sink ; and what did he do, my little dear ? why, he said, ‘ Lord save, or I perish.’ Now you are afraid, Moss, of being alone ; you think that the great and good God is angry with you. Now do you do what Peter did, cry to him, ‘ Lord save, or I perish ;’ he is full of compassion, he loves little children, and is nigh to all that call upon him.” From this time they found it necessary to speak chiefly of the love and pity of God, of the tender mercy of the Saviour ; to speak of him as full of compassion, to mark the flowers, the fruit, the pretty butterflies, and all the varied charms of nature ; pointed to him the beauties of the clouds by day, the setting sun, the rising moon, all these wonders of the hand of God ; and then turning to Genesis, “ You see, my dear little boy, that if it had not been for sin, man would have walked in the garden, and talked with God ; but as soon as he sinned, he was afraid, and hid himself, and God was no more seen openly, but by particular revelation, because he is a holy God, and he cannot behold iniquity.”

Every word of this went straight to the heart of the little Moss, he understood it,

he felt it, he himself had been a culprit, he was afraid, and this lesson brought home to his young heart was increasingly useful to him, more especially when he could feel what his dear father was daily endeavouring to impress upon him, that though God hated sin, yet he loved the creatures of his hand, and was reconciled unto them through Christ Jesus.

It was some time before the dear child seemed fully to comprehend this, but one day, when his mother had been displeased with him, for going out without her permission, the baby lip curled, and he was prepared to try his power, when his mother, though gentle, was firm, and he made no progress. At length his young heart was subdued; and it was one feature in Esther's character that she always met her culprit with increased tenderness after any little cloud, and the endearment seemed more prized from the temporary privation. And as she sat at her work, stroking his young head, "You love your mother, Moss?" "Yes, dearly," was the warm-hearted reply; "and you love her more, Moss, now she forgives you." "Me do," and the little creature was full of endeavours to show that he did. When she wanted to teach him an impressive lesson, she would take him and seat him on a

table before her. "Now, my boy, your dear Saviour, who died for you and for us all, that he might bring you nigh to your good and gracious God, deserves all your love; do you love him, Moss?" "O yes, me do, me do." "And you love me better now, Moss, than you did when I was angry?" "Yes," and again "me do" was repeated, and he seemed to feel all the force of the appeal though so young, and it seemed the first dawn of light let into his infant mind on the subject of reconciled love. She then read him that beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son, and dwelt on the father going out to meet him when he was yet a great way off, putting the ring on his finger, and the best robe—a mark of honour peculiar in the country where this scene lay. The child was animated and delighted, and from this time he took more pleasure in this picture in his grandmamma's Bible than any other in the whole collection; and so strong was this early impression of reconciled love, that we may safely say it grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength.

How much do those lose who never look into the Bible, but with the cold formality of reading a chapter, and closing the book as a duty done. These sweet appeals to the revealed will of God strengthen our

principles and nourish our best affections ; and how desirable is it in a rising family that both the heads of the house should be agreed, not merely in training their children, but their servants : it produces harmony of plan and simplicity of principle, and I own that I have been surprised at the effect produced even where there did not appear to be a radical change in the character, a sort of awe upon the mind, in thus referring to a perfect standard. “ I being in the way, the Lord met me,” was the answer of Abraham’s servant ; and those who are thus found in the way of waiting for the blessing, depending firmly on his word and promise shall find that he withholds no good thing from those that walk uprightly.

There was one custom not uncommon in many parishes, a sort of feast day, some relic of celebration of the patron saint, and it required much firmness on the part of these young people to keep their servants from sharing in these festivities ; and the more, because there they were to meet their relations, whom they could not see at another time. How to break through it, and not seem unkind, they knew not, they made it a matter of prayer for direction, and were the more determined to stand firm, because their indoor family being large, it involved

late hours and many other inconveniences.

As they were talking it over with Margaret, she said in her quick way, "Dears, could you not have a feast yourselves, for it is seven years since ye were married. And how many years is it, Mr. Kemp, since you came to the farm? Twelve, I think, the beginning of next month. Well, dears, do ye have a feast of your own, and if the weather holds fine, let them have a treat in the hay field. You see it will come just after the saint's day, and you can make it St. Michael if ye will." Michael started, "Oh no, oh no." However, they determined to give it thought, and to propose it; so that very evening, after family worship, Michael said, looking at them with peculiar kindness, "You all know I wish you happy." "O yes, master," and there was a general murmur of assent. "Would you do any thing to oblige me?" "That we would," was the general reply. "Well then, if I were to invite your friends to see you here, would you give up going to the feast?" There was a general look, as though he had touched something very near the heart; and Mary Medway, though she was a stranger, had been invited, and thought it a good thing, and did not like to resign it.

In short, there was a general murmur of hesitation like rising resistance, with the exception of William, Rose, and Betty Smith ; it seemed as though none would be willing to give up this promised pleasure. “ What can I do ? ” said Michael ; “ I should be sorry to part with you, but I have many objections against this meeting ; while my servants were out-doors, I had no control over them on a Sunday, but now I seem answerable that the sabbath should not be profaned.” “ But we go to church,” said one ; “ we go to church,” said another. “ But as soon as you come out there is drinking and smoking, laughing and talking ; this ought not to be on a Sunday.” He waited—they looked down, they knew its truth. “ Well, I am very sorry for it ; I see I shall lose many that I value, but if it must be, it must be, my mind is made up. I had hoped, that by seeing all your friends here, you might have been induced to oblige me, but we must part.” There was not a heart there, however obdurate, but sunk at these words : they saw he was hurt, more hurt than angry, and they did not know well what to do ; so as in all cases when they were at a loss, they went to Betty Smith, and she gave but one advice to all, “ Humble yourself, my good maid, humble your-

self, my good man, it is the only way ; you are not to expect master to change his mind, I know he will not, because he is in the right, and then he never gives up, I can tell you. If master had made a mistake, and found himself wrong, he would not mind owning himself in a fault, or begging your pardon either. Once, when he spoke to me about something he thought wrong, and I made it out to him clear that he was mistaken, he was quite grieved and ashamed, and humbled himself much more than any of you would do." It was a long struggle between the pride of the heart and the desire of keeping the place where they were all so happy. " How shall we speak to master ? what shall we say ?" Betty hesitated whether she should undertake to manage for them, or whether she should make them conquer their pride and speak for themselves ; and she was following the example Michael had so long set, looking for some scripture rule to guide conduct : " But have compassion one of another." So she said, " I tell you what I will do for you ; I will tell master, as it is a proof of your duty as you gives it up, because it's a pleasure you have been all used to. But now mind, if you can't make up your minds to be satisfied, I will have nothing to do with it." They looked upon each

other, and said they were satisfied, and William undertook to speak for the men, and Betty Smith for the women.

The weather proved propitious, and all the friends of the Brow Farm servants came up the day after the feast by particular invitation; they were entertained with hospitality, and even the little children handed about the seed cake with great good-humour and pleasantry. Some of the parents of the servants wondered what objection Mr. Kemp could have to their going out to see their friends, and why he should have them at home? Betty Smith, who heard the wonder, went among them, and said, "I will tell you, neighbours. My master has as great a dread of breaking God's commandments as breaking the laws of the land, and more; and do you think, neighbours, when ye are met together on a Sunday, and have not seen one another for a long time, do you think you speak much about the sermon you have heard, or the Scriptures ye have been reading?" No, they could not say they did. "You see master has given you a very handsome treat here." They owned he had, and he was very kind, "and your mistress is a sweet lady too; and the pretty little children, why, I think it must be a pleasure to live with them," said one; and before

night, they all agreed that Mr. Kemp was very kind, he was in the right on't, and that they had never spent a more contented day ; and when they rose to go, Michael said, " that if they wished any of their children to walk forward with them, he had no objection, only to let them be back in time." So it was all settled, and the party set out gratefully and happily.

As they walked by the way, " I cannot think what it is that makes every one speak ill of your master and mistress ; they rail about them, and call them ——" William was of the party. " Well, and what do they call them, neighbour?" " Why, saints, and that they could not speak without turning up their eyes." " Well, I have lived with master more than eleven years, and I have lived with him when he was a servant himself; and he was always good and kind, and as for his being a saint, I do not see any harm in that, though I do not suppose he would like it himself, because he is so very humble. But there was St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, and these were all good men. I should think so. But since I have taken to read the Bible, I have found out a secret, that it is from scorn that they call them saints, not from any respect. You see what an honour it would

be, if they meant to liken them to such good people as St. Paul and St. John, who were beloved by our dear Saviour, and who wrote such beautiful accounts of him, that one would not think that any man *could* be like them.” “No, William, no more they could,” said William’s sister, “unless God’s own Spirit made them so; and let us take care how we mock at *him*, *that’s* serious work; our day is coming, and what says the Scripture? ‘I will mock at their calamity, and I will laugh when their fear cometh.’” These conversations sunk upon the hearts of the little audience, and the peace of the house remained undisturbed. They submitted to all Michael’s regulations, gave up Sunday’s feast, and felt the comfort of keeping within the limits appointed by God.

I know not why it should be, but so it certainly is, that when the mind is once brought in subjection, and the conduct regulated, the very persons who were most disposed to do wrong, are the most severe upon other culprits. They seemed to have forgotten that they were themselves liable to the same error; I could account for it upon religious principles, and could clearly perceive that none but those out of whose eyes the beam were taken could see clearly to pull out the mote; but it seems as though

memory failed in this instance, that those who so lately joined the giddy party, and wished to share the pleasures of the sabbath-breaking, should now be loud in their censure of others. But we may best give this in a short dialogue.

It was after the second annual meeting at the Brow, that Rose and Ann Medway were assisting to do some needle-work with Betty Smith, Ann exclaimed, "Well, what a pleasant meeting we had." "Yes," said Rose, "and no stain upon the conscience." "That's what I think," said Ann, "is the comfort of it. How can people enjoy themselves when they be breaking God's commandments, as master says?" A slight tinge passed over the brow of Betty Smith, and her cheek was suffused. "Why, dears," said Betty, "you see they do not think, that's it." "But they ought to think," said Ann Medway. "O dear me," said Betty Smith, "how soon people do forget." "Forget what?" said Ann. Rose began to guess what Betty meant, and was silent; but Ann went on. "For my part, I wonder how they can be happy." "Ask Ann Medway that question," said Betty Smith; "ask her how she could be happy this time two years." "Me, Mrs. Smith, why, I never went." "That is true; but who

would have gone if their master would have let them?" "Why yes, I know that, but I had never been there; I thought it was something mighty pleasant, but how could I tell Mrs. Smith?" "Well now, my girl," said Betty, "do you turn to Matthew, xviii. 28. You are just in the same spirit with this poor man; you see, though he had got the money and been forgiven, yet how hard he was upon his fellow. Now you, Ann, who wanted to go, and you, Rose, who would have liked to have gone. You see you are blaming, and condemning, and forgetting the sins of your own hearts." They both cast their eyes down, for they felt the truth of what Betty was saying. "And what should we do, Mrs. Smith?" said Ann. "Why, dears, ye should walk humbly, and ye should remember what ye were yourselves, and have pity upon others."

It was far more difficult to convince Ann than Rose, such is the advantage of early association with good people, however slight. I can only compare it with the effect which dwelling near the Jews had upon the neighbouring nations: they gained the knowledge of God and his laws almost intuitively, and there is an outward decency of conduct which such knowledge generates, and which otherwise

they would never have attained to. Thus, for instance, the infidel who acts in the light of revelation, while he denies that light, and ascribes that to nature which unassisted nature could never attain. To take a view of all the islands we have visited in their original state; you will find them worshipping idols, eating human victims, and delighting in the most cruel reprisals in war. These are the fruits of poor unassisted natural reason; we need but read the Missionary Register, and see what is doing in the four quarters of the globe, to bear testimony to the truth of my observation. Absurd, superstitious, idolatrous cruelty, are found every where, till the light of revelation dawns. Ask the poor widow of the Hindoo wherefore she devotes herself to a cruel and untimely death? She would reply, "That some hope of dwelling in an ideal state of happiness with her departed husband leads to this rash desperation." Ask the fifty courtiers, who, following the light of a wild superstition, immolate themselves upon the grave of their king; they will tell you, that some fanatical expectations in attending their deceased master in his new state of being has wrought them to this frenzy. But not to multiply instances, human nature left to itself is full of the

wildest absurdity, and natural religion exhibits only the insane vagaries of disordered imagination. He who made the heart, who knows what is in the heart, can alone regulate and bring it back to him from whom it hath strayed. Oh, the mighty mischief wrought by man's disobedience, when he chooses not to retain God in his thoughts, given up to believe a lie, working all uncleanness with greediness, plunging deeper at every step in the awful ruin, till even the increase of the multitude strengthens the fatal determination to do evil. How common is the infatuated observation, "I do no more than others." Little do these sad votaries of eternal ruin think how companionship in misery will aggravate their misery. Sinner, stop, ere the descent be too mighty for thee; it is truly said, that the first steps are the most important. It is vain to suppose we can pause in our midway course; no, the impetus is then too strong, and down they rush without power, I had almost said, without inclination to stop.

Jem's little ground was now in forwardness, he rose early and worked late; and Peggy's dear friend, the kind Mr. Brownrigg, was indefatigable in his attendance on masons and carpenters. This good man had very correct ideas of any good he

was about to perform. Thus, for instance : “ I am not going to build you a drawing-room, Mrs. Peggy, the room you will inhabit will serve for kitchen, parlour, and all ;” but it was an ample kitchen : “ and by and bye,” said her kind master, “ when we shall see Brown and Co. gilt and emblazoned with many a flourish, when young apprentices pour in their hundreds upon you for board and instruction in the art of slipping and grafting, then my good Mr. James may build you a smart parlour if he pleases.” So the new house consisted of one large airy kitchen, with a washhouse on the one side, and on the other a pantry, in which to lodge every comfort of life ; a most excellent cellar, two good sleeping rooms with attics over them : and as for the green-house, forcing-house, &c. it was very complete ; and as this good man considered before he acted, he laid out his money in a spot where it might reasonably be supposed it would return him interest ; that is, at that extremity of the parish where other parishes bounded, and might reasonably be expected to come for those articles which James had to dispose of : it was equi-distant from three towns, and within a mile of the village church. Neatness pervaded every part, all was new and all was pretty, except the

garden—that was young, and a young garden is never pretty. And the bridal day came, and the young couple invited all that were dear to them on both sides; and their kind patron opened his cottage, and procured an excellent dinner, which was served up cold: he was an orderly man, and any thing like bustle destroyed his happiness; and he was determined, though parting with Peggy, to smile through the day.

Perhaps it might be as well to give the reader some account of his parting advice.

It was in the evening of the day before, with a voice almost tremulous, that he said, “Child, step into the parlour,” and sitting down in his ample chair, and leaning upon a small table that stood before him, “As you have no natural relations, child, to counsel and protect you, I feel every way responsible, and I shall not consider my duty towards you fulfilled without a parting word.” Peggy took up her apron, and began to wipe her eyes; and Brownrigg, with his natural drollery, which even at this moment could not be conquered, threw his handkerchief at her, and desired she would not misapply things but put all things to their right use. The good girl smiled through

her tears, took the handkerchief, and bent her attention while Brownrigg proceeded. "I hope, I think, nay more, I really believe this young man will do all in his power to make you happy, and I am sure, Peggy, you will make him an excellent wife. Though I am a bachelor, I think myself qualified to give you some counsel; it is an old saying, 'that those who stand by see more of the game than those who play;' and if it is so, I am in this sense qualified. Now, child, women are very apt to be troublesome in trifles, and as trifles make up the sum of human life, and as they occur every day, they are very often troublesome. Thus I have seen a man almost worried to death, because he did not rub his shoes; and as we have all some foolish tricks or petty habits, which it is almost too late to think of correcting when we come to man's estate, these are things women must bear with, and if a wife is determined that a man shall not turn his cushion before he sits down in his chair, or scratch his head when he is thinking, or do any foolish trick he has been in the habit of doing when he was a bachelor; I say, if a man is to be tortured like a child, he will grow weary, and perhaps angry, and thus many a fool-

ish female has thrown away her diamonds, and picked up buttons." All this while he sat with the fore-finger of his right-hand pointing to the palm of his left. "Now observe, child, do not, when your husband makes a litter in the room, which perhaps he may, for all men are not like your old bachelor master, do not, I say, make a parade of putting every thing in order, and run about with a duster in your hand as though you would say, 'See what trouble you give me.' No, do all quietly and humbly. One thing by the way, child; remember we are the lords of the creation, and it is your part to obey; and if we do let you govern sometimes 'tis a foolish mistake we make; so I say, Peggy, child, do you keep in your place. Ah, that is a good thought; I have seen men blowing the fire, there is nothing a man dislikes like a bad fire and dirty hearth. Now you see, child, when a man comes in from his business, he expects to be petted and made comfortable. Oh, there is another thing—but I must finish what I was saying about fires: mind to manage your fire well, you will be particularly well off in this respect, you may have all round coals; but observe me, be sure to let your fire-side be very comfortable; the whole com-

fort of your room depends upon it. Now mind me, child, find out all his peculiarities ; observe them, attend to them. Mind, I don't mean, if he does any thing wrong, that you should encourage that ; no, I am talking of trifles, child, immaterial things ;" and he lengthened out the word. " Observe, always to have your dinner ready at the time—perhaps he may not be in time, that is not your fault ; do you be ready, and mind to let him have always a clean table-cloth, Peggy, there are many contrivances for keeping it clean ; and be sure you never let him find you dirty or negligent. Oh, apropos of that, some girls, some very smart girls, do think when they are married that there is an end of the business, that they have no reason to be smart any longer. Why, child, that is the very time to begin ; it is far more difficult to keep us than to win us ; be sure, you are always very neat, very clean, and mind one thing, very good-tempered. Never meet him with a frown on your brow on any consideration ; a man goes out and calls on his neighbour, sees a neat wife and some smart daughters, comes home to his own *dowdy*. Why, you see he must make comparisons, and pity himself perhaps, poor fellow ! No, you be advised, my nice child,

and if there are any comparisons to be made, let them be all to your own advantage. Mind me, now I don't expect you to be perfect, Peggy, and if you fail in any instance, observe always to be the first to notice it, and say, you are sorry; and if by chance *he* should notice it, never defend it, for it is that which provokes a man. You see it is adding one fault to another, it is what no man can bear, it is not to be supposed they can. By the way, it is no use talking about children before they are born, but if ever it should please God to give you any, mind and look at Fanny Meredith, she manages her children remarkably well, and they are not easy to manage, for they have a great deal of spirit in them: the boy's a prince, he seems born to command, and he *has had* a royal will. Now she does not contradict them every moment, and chide them, and scold them, but if they want any thing which they are not to have, she settles the business directly, takes the thing from them, and looks at them firmly but kindly. Now though she only keeps a girl, and has plenty of work besides, I never was disturbed by the squalling of her brats, though I have had many a comfortable dish of tea there. No, the thing is understood, she governs them, not they her; and now,

Peggy, you may wonder that I have said nothing to you upon the subject of religion, child, but—" and he looked up solemnly—" I am sorry to say it is a subject I have so lately understood, that I feel as though it would be presumption in me; but my dear good Peggy, if to own that I regret I have not sooner turned my thoughts to this most delightful, most important subject; if to own, that when I ought to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, I am blind, and see men as trees walking; if to own this to you, Margaret Macdonald, would be of any use to you, whilst I do it with sorrow of heart—" "Oh, my dear master," said Peggy, "you have been so kind, so good, you could not have been kinder, you could not have been better, if you had been my own father; and now, sir, I do hope that Kitty will make you a very good servant: she is very handy, and she knows your ways now, but if you should be ill, if ever you have one of your violent headaches, my dear master, I could not be happy that you should have any body to attend you but myself, because I know what to do. Now, promise me never to do without me, if you want me." "No, child, I cannot make such a promise, I shall want you every day, my good Peggy, I do not expect ever to sup-

ply your place. You know I am an odd old fellow, and like nothing new, not even a new shoe-horn." "Oh sir, I hope you will be happy; I am sure, if you are not, I cannot be—it would grieve me sadly to see you put out of your way, and made uncomfortable."

Just at this point of the question, Rose Meredith called in to see her friend, and neither Brownrigg nor Peggy could quite recover themselves so as to appear with their usual composure. "Is any thing the matter, Peggy?" said Rose, with a voice of sympathy. "Nothing at all, child, only we are both blockheads together, both want a whipping." When Rose understood the state of the case, she said, "I wish, sir, you would have me, I am sure my mistress would spare me, if you liked to have me." It was a thought Brownrigg had often had, but he could not bear to deprive Esther of a good servant to accommodate himself. Rose was so prepossessed with this idea, that she slipped out, and went to the Brow immediately; and while she was gone, Brownrigg said, "Oh, Peggy, there was a thought, I had one thing more I meant to speak to you about; I had nearly forgotten it till you talked about my being ill, and that made me remember it. You see,

child, some women are very fond of being pitied, and they never have the least complaint, but they are sure to cry out and make a very great fuss about it. Now, though a man may pity you a little, and go on perhaps two or three years, being sorry and sorry, yet it is not in human nature to like it always, no creature can love an hospital; no, child, 'tis impossible to avoid being tired of saying, 'Poor dear,' all day long: I never hear a man say it, but I doubt not he must think, that when a door keeps creak, creak, he could almost wish it shut." Peggy hardly understood her master; he saw she did not, and he explained. "You see, child, if I had such a wife threatening me every day to go, I should be apt to think she had better be gone at once." Peggy shook her head incredulously. Of all the qualities for which Brownrigg was eminent, his kindness in illness was most so: he never appeared wearied of remedies. When Peggy had the tooth-ache, he was always bringing her some new nostrum. "I think this would do you good; and why wont you try that? and did I not bid you not to sit in your wet shoes?" and he would follow her about with the most provoking kindness. "No, child, you may talk as you will about tenderness and feel-

ing, and pity and cruelty, but I would rather live in an hospital than with a grumbling wife ; a man is not to be expected to be always petting his patients, but with such a near relation as a wife he is expected to be full of kindness ; and so he might be for a short season and for a long season : but for life, child, think of that ; I tell you, it is not in nature." Brownrigg grew so eager, that Peggy could not help laughing, saying, " she thanked God she was very well." " Well, take care of yourself, and keep so ; and whenever you begin to grumble, think of your poor old master, and don't go on any longer."

Rose returned, but not alone, for her mistress came with her. " O my beloved uncle ! it is the very thing I have thought of before, I do think she will suit you exactly." The two girls had gone to the kitchen—" But how do you know the girl would like it ? there is no one to gossip with, it is a very different place from your house, Esther, I am getting older and older, more and more particular." " Oh, no, uncle, you are every day more dear and more delightful, kinder and better ;" she took his hand and kissed it, and they wept together, and the business was done ; and the very day after the marri-

age Rose was settled with Brownrigg, and Kitty went to the Brow.

Michael Meredith, who was always a favourite with Brownrigg, and a frequent visiter at his cottage, was now doubly welcome, as his aunt was established there; and his old friend, who was anxious to have him with James, was often found inquiring how the Latin went on, and regretting he had not made some acquisition of the sort in his youth. "For you see, my dear boy, I was at an excellent school in the Borough, the Borough of Southwark, a fine extensive place, my dear. We had a great many fine scholars, as I have been told: I wish you had been there, my little Michael, they would have made something of such a boy as you. I was upon the foundation, my dear, had always a taste for enterprize, and was beloved by all my schoolfellows; but this is a great mistake which children make to laugh at the studious. There was one fellow whom we used to call the taper, because he was long and thin, and would study by a little candle at one corner of the school-room in a winter evening. And mind, Michael, this very boy whom we used to laugh at, is become lord mayor of London, and makes such fine speeches to the common council,

and went up with the address to the king; and the king said to some one who stood by, he was very glad that his good city of London had got such an eloquent leader. Now, my boy, such a word as that from his sovereign warms a man—it encourages him, you see, and I was glad our good king should make such a sensible observation; it becomes the crown to encourage learning.”

Michael used to listen to these observations of his friend with the most profound respect; he had often heard stories of the Mansion House and Guildhall, but had very little notion of their magnitude; and when Brownrigg told him that it was four times the size of the church, he could not contain his astonishment—his youthful imagination was fired, and we may venture to say the grandeur of the Mansion House was sometimes an indefinable motive for exertion. Brownrigg’s former residence in London had given him evident superiority in the eyes of the village; and when Mr. Ferguson first settled, the only person beyond the Rectory whom he could visit, as he thought, was the cottage of the retired tobacconist: there he was always amused by original communication, and welcomed with unreserved good-humour and hospitality; had a warm seat by the

side of his fire, and sometimes read the newspaper.

We must own, there was something of regret when he read there of his juniors rising into notice and command, while he was just getting the bread for the day in a distant part of his native country. But this good man was an acquisition; for though Brownrigg was a kind neighbour, and very chatty, he had not been brought up as an agriculturist, and found it difficult to keep up that sort of conversation with which the village abounded; and while Ferguson supplied this want, Brownrigg was an active and kind friend, assisting, and overlooking every little alteration in his new residence, and supplying that knowledge of mankind in which Ferguson was eminently deficient. Oh, my dear reader, if we were all to extend an arm, where it is wanted; to supply each other's deficiencies, we should not only bestow, but receive comfort. The selfish being, shut up in his own narrow circle, knows little of the pleasure to be enjoyed in this sweet interchange of mutual good offices. As it is sometimes seen that the most unexpected success attends the most unpromising characters, so at this moment the whole family of the Kemp's were surprised by the marriage of Joe to his master's daugh-

ter : she was a smart girl, but not very discriminating, it may be supposed ; Joe had known her many years, and he went on so long, so quietly and so steadily, that the father made no objection ; and while his own family were wondering and astonished, the father of the young person was rather pleased than otherwise to have her settled in a house where respectability had so long distinguished them ; Joe might really be said to owe this happiness to his connexions, the care they took to keep him from improper society, the influence of his father over his weak mind, the neatness of his mother in his personal appearance.—Reader, it is no small blessing to be respectably connected, and those who link themselves with honourable persons are far happier than those who look for wealth.

This young creature was really pitied by the Kemp family, who thought she was deceived ; and so conscientious was old Joseph, that had not the affair gone so far he would have spoken to his master. Now some little reader will exclaim, “ What, injure his own son ? ” “ Yes, my dear young friend, Joseph Kemp was under that law. ‘ Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.’ ” But he had no reason to

regret his forbearance, for a gracious Providence so ordered it that Joseph behaved very well, and all his habits under his father having the force of law, he did nothing wrong, had no temptation to wander, no genius to betray, and we are happy to say that his little wife, though not highly gifted, felt her power, and used it without abusing it. James Finch, in his frequent visits to the Brow, gained much under the ministry of Mr. Lascelles, and was in the habit of occasional calls at all the houses, not excepting the cottage of Margaret Beal, whose light burnt clearer and brighter as she advanced nearer to her heavenly home, and how this old Christian rejoiced in seeing the young ones around her rising in life and usefulness, can only be conceived by the Christian mind. She would say to herself sometimes, "Yes, I see it, the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters do cover the sea; it will be—I shall not live to see it; but no matter, I shall be in——;" and she lengthened out the words, "Where there is fulness of joy and pleasures at thy right-hand for evermore."

In the pastoral visits of Mr. Lascelles he was wont to say, "To some houses I go as a learner, to others as a teacher. At the cottage of Margaret Beal, Mentoria,

I never call but I seem as if I had brightened my armour; and when I return to my own dwelling, where blessings are scattered in profusion about me, I am ready to say, ‘How many things are here which a Christian does not want.’” “My love,” said Mrs. Lascelles, “I hope you do not think I desire any thing beyond what is right?” “I hope not, I am sure,” and she hesitated. “Far from it, my love; I only say, that when I visit the cottages of my poor neighbours—poor in this world, yet rich in faith and heirs of eternal life, I can only say, ‘How does our good God make up with the smile of his countenance for the want of all that a vain world deems necessary.’ And when I sit down and look around me, and see one little improvement, and say, ‘It is pretty,’ and improve another, I look upon it as in Scripture language, ‘cisterns that will hold no water.’ Nothing can satisfy the christian mind but thy presence; all besides is too mean, too poor for an immortal soul.”

At these occasional conversations his dear children were present; the elder Miss Lascelles was of a silent character, peculiarly prone to reflect upon and digest conversation, even when she appeared not to listen to it, and would often retire into the silence of her own apartment, and

carefully note down her father's conversation and her mother's reply, thus laying up a treasure for those days when all that delighted them should be silent in the dust. Not that the dear child thought thus, for she could not have penned a word under such an impression. These dear parents frequently trembled as they looked upon their rising offspring, and Mrs. Lascelles would say, "O, my love, I can enter into the feelings of poor Rebecca, when she says, 'Should Jacob take a wife of the daughters of the land, what good would my life do me;' and I cannot help thinking sometimes, if my dear children were to form worldly connexions, my life would indeed become wearisome." It was just after a conversation of this sort that Edmund Walker came on a visit, bringing tidings of his father and his mother, and kind greeting; and Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles exchanged a look which both understood, but neither explained. It said thus much, "If such a thing were proposed, I should not object, should you?" The thought had passed Edmund's mind, and he came with an observing eye on both the young ladies: he saw the elder, the very transcript of her mother, like her in person, only in the bloom of health and youth, and still more like her in mind, moving so very

quietly, that you would suppose she did nothing, yet so punctually and orderly, that she accomplished far more than a bustling character could perform; she was a listener of the intelligent kind, her eye shewed an interest in all that passed. There was a look of breathless intelligence about her when the conversation was interesting, as if she feared to lose a word; and when she spoke, it was so to the point, so calm and judicious, that the little Maria would often call her Mamma playfully, intimating that she was as sententious and grave as became the maternal character; while Miss Lascelles would softly stroke her cheek, and only say, "Fairy, whither next?"

Nothing more severe passed between these devoted sisters, whose contrast of character rather increased than diminished the general happiness. How they were beloved by both parents may be conceived better than described; they saw them carefully pursuing all that pointed to peace and blessedness, avoiding the broad road with fear and trembling, and the line over which they passed from the fallen state to the renewed inward purity was scarcely perceptible; yet the mother, who daily watched with anxious hope for the divine impress, thought she saw somewhat more than poor unassisted nature could produce

in each of their treasures. And how this hope and this perception cheered the heart of each parent is more easily felt than described ; for what is all this world can bestow, how poor, how unsatisfactory ; at that hour when this mortal must be laid down in the grave ; and indeed at no moment can it be said to satisfy a mind of any compass ; no, there is a craving desire, a longing after immortality. Edmund Walker saw and admired both the young ladies, and at one moment really hesitated which he should prefer. At length the age of the elder, her steadiness, and many fascinating qualities, determined him, though it may truly be said he could have liked either, had either stood single. It is not my intention to enter at any length on this subject, but we thought the reader would feel an interest in young persons whom he had known so long ;—and how different is the manner in which a modest Christian girl receives a declaration of preference to that in which vain worldly-minded young persons look for admiration : the one is calm, and self-possessed, and tranquil ; the other full of flutter and restlessness, exalted by mortal preference, seems almost to forget that she is mortal ; and we are pleased to say, that during the period of probation these well-trained young

persons forgot no friend, no dependant, but filled with an anxious desire to perform every duty of their little day, they travelled calmly, rationally, and peacefully through that period which is but too commonly marked as a period of selfishness. Dear Mr. Walker's eye flashed delight, when he heard of his son's proposal and his son's acceptance; and indeed we may say, that the families on both sides were equally pleased; and as for Sophy Walker, to whom her brother was inestimably dear, her eyes overflowed with delight, as she said, "Oh Edmund, Matilda Lascelles is the very girl for you." But happiness is not the lot of mortal beings, at least happiness unmixed; for just at this period, when all that was earthly combined to please them, and the smile of heaven was upon them, the disorder of dear Mr. Walker became decidedly worse; hope could no longer flatter those who loved him. His departure was at hand, and the saint was about to enter the presence of his Saviour. His disease became acute, and at first bore hard on the distressed body. It was greatly to be feared, though no doubt could remain to those around him that he was a happy blessed spirit, still it was feared that the clay tenement would press upon the immortal inhabitant, so as to deaden the power of expressing its

hopes. His weeping partner was bowing submissively to the will of God, when this un hoped for gratification, the delight of seeing him depart joyfully was nearly resigned. At this very moment the utmost wishes of her heart were granted, and he spoke of things immortal as one whose lip had been touched by a coal from off the altar.

It is not for me, reader, to attempt to do justice to the expression of that blessedness which a saint on the confines of glory is sometimes permitted to describe, but a few faint recollections I will attempt. It was after a paroxysm of severe pain, when the exquisite relief of ease gives a sense of delight which no one but those who have suffered acutely can conceive ; it was at a moment like this that our sainted friend exclaimed, “ O, what an awful declaration is this ! ‘ I shall see him, but not now ; I shall behold him, but not nigh.’ O heavenly Father, I thank thee, this is not my case. Oh, Sophia, you who have seen me in all my weakness, you who have known me in a state of doubt and trembling ; hearken, my beloved, my precious partner ; come near while I tell you what he has done for my soul. I have the most perfect sense of security ; “ I know in whom I have believed ; and I also know that he is not only able,

but willing to keep that which I have committed unto him." Oh my love! what a moment is this; I stand upon the threshold of eternity, and now, while the enemy would harass, perplex, and bewilder me, he is not permitted; but my foundation is secure, I am borne up by divine love and pity, and I *can say* my beloved is mine, and I am his. Oh, praise him, praise him for me; had I ten thousand tongues, it is all too little to speak the joy of the redeemed soul.—Sophia, words are too lightly treated in this world of ours, we do not weigh them sufficiently. Mark, my beloved, every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account of. Now observe me, my love; as I am leaving this land of shadows, and entering upon immortal security, where all is substance and reality, every promise of my blessed Saviour, every precept he hath uttered, seems engraved with tenfold certainty upon my mind—all rises with vital importance, all bears upon the grand question, Is my soul safe?" And here the dear old Christian smiled. "I can say it is. Oh the blessedness of eternal certainty!—Sophia, I cannot speak it, but I feel it—here, my love;" and he pressed his hand upon his bosom. "Jesus loveth me with an everlasting love, and I shall see him, be with him, to behold his glory."

Just then his son entered: "My darling boy, think not that I am incapable of entering into your prospects; think not that I look upon them with an indifferent eye; far from it, I regard this connexion as the answer to my prayers, I regard it as one link in the chain that leads to your eternal happiness. Never, at no one period of my life, did the importance of earthly connexions appear with so much weight as at this moment. I enter into all your joys, my dear, but I have seen the sun in his brightness, and my dazzled eye beholds mortal affairs in dim confusion; and yet, my dear dutiful child, I do view this projected step in your life as most important. I would fain lay my withering hand on the young head of thy future partner, but he who hath seen fit to deny me this can supply this temporal hindrance;" and his brilliant eye was cast upward. "In that land of light and love to which I go, Edmund, distance shall be done away, and time shall be no longer." Mrs. Walker drew near his couch, "Would you wish, my love, to see Matilda? our betrothed child is here, she shares in Edmund's sorrow, she longs to bend her knee by your side." Mr. Walker replied, with the tear in his eye, "Dear christian girl, I rejoice for thy sake, Edmund." And

now, with a firm, composed, and pensive step, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Protheroe Walker, Matilda entered. For a moment or two there was silence, all seemed to feel too much to be able to speak; Matilda, bending her knee beside him, said, "Dear sir, I am so happy you permit me to see you." "It is a moment of some importance, my dear, this last battle of an old soldier; 'but I am more than conqueror through him that loved me.' Yes, my promised daughter, I rejoice that I speak to one who can understand; I rejoice that my son hath followed the resolve of good old Bishop Beveridge, and chosen one for his bride who hath first chosen Christ. Perhaps you have heard of my conflicts, it seemed as though the enemy would not let me pass to my everlasting rest, but by stout resistance." But smiling, he continued, "There are more with us than there are against us; 'I am more than conqueror through him that hath loved me.' Observe that, my dear; I feel now that I know something of what Paul meant, that love of Christ which passeth knowledge. We speak these words, but none can know or feel their full import, their peculiar blessedness, till they are brought to an hour like this; till now, I never knew, I never felt, the exceeding riches of the love of

Christ. Oh, what it is ! oh, what it is to pass from death unto life, from hope to certainty :” and the smile of peace was upon his countenance as he spoke it, and he was no more. All present stood in breathless distress ; his bereaved wife looked upon her children, and pressing her hand upon her forehead, in the keen agony of mental suffering, bent her knee. Every one present knelt also, but no word was uttered, no sound heard—it was the stillness of eternal repose, and they seemed in the state of the prophet Elisha ; their master was taken from their head. But Sophia Walker began to fear for her dear mother ; when she glanced her eye upon her, she saw the fixed look : she rose, and with determined, cool, yet imperative resolution, she withdrew her from the room.

When the shutters of the Rectory were closed, and the deep bell pressed upon the ear, scarce a heart in that village was unmoved. In his own family there was such a blank, that every being there seemed ready to exclaim, “ And I, whither shall I go !” The event was differently felt at home : it was the loss of a cherished object, or one who was continually ready to make known the will of God concerning them. Were they sick, he was their counsellor and their friend ; were they un-

happy, he soothed them; did they rejoice, he shared their joy; and they were all personally inquiring who should supply that blank, and make up to them the loss they were now sustaining. Perhaps nothing shows the selfishness of the heart more clearly than sorrow; let any one faithfully examine wherefore they grieve, and they will find themselves continually going back to a personal point. In the removal of a saint like this, if we feel aright, there is nothing but rejoicing: "He hath fought the good fight, he hath finished his course, and there is laid up for him a crown of rejoicing." This is all a clear matter of thankfulness, no regret blends, and yet how deeply does such a loss penetrate the human heart.

But as I before said, some felt this removal with unmixed sorrow; with others, it was sorrow blended with regret. With the irreligious farmer, who grudged no expense to dress his daughters, or gratify his palate, but who thought every shilling spent for God and his minister a sad privation; to these persons the tears were soiled by the recollection of how many unkind words, how many ill-natured reflections had been cast upon this pious, harmless man of God. Even Mrs. Potter was constrained to say, "Well, there be some

as would be less missed than the Reverend, that I will say : he was not a bad man, take him all together, he was rather too over-righteous, that was my fault against him." At the turnpike-house, where we have noted a conversation before, inquiries were made by the old man, as the servants hurried backwards and forwards, and as the physician's carriage stopped to pay. Even here the interest was manifested, and the concern expressed, but here also human nature appeared. " Well, I always said he was a good man, did I not ?" " Yes, you did ; and you said what was true."

But we turn to the sincere mourner, to those cottages where the truth had been received in simplicity ; we will look at Mary Kemp and her weeping husband ; and as Joe's good-natured wife strove to comfort, she said, " I know it is wrong, Phillis ; I feel sure that the dear Reverend is in glory. O yes, I know that." And as Joseph Kemp sat by the window, turning the leaves of his old Bible, " I am thinking, Mary, as I should like to send down for our Michael." " 'Tis a melancholy journey for him, my dear, and I do not see what good it will do." " No, but then he can do as he likes ; he may be grieved, perhaps if we do not let him

know." " Shall I go, father," said Joseph " Yes, I wish you would, Joe." " I could borrow my father's tax-cart, and take Phillis." And then going in his father's tax-cart was almost as good as Michael going in his uncle's gig. But Joe had sense enough to keep this to himself, so he and his wife set off to the Brow, not at all like the bearers of such ill tidings. They were received with the greatest kindness, and Joe was highly delighted to exhibit his wife the following Sunday at church. An universal bow went round among the light and trifling, and even the steady admired his choice, and could not help congratulating him. It was an advantage for this poor young man, much to be coveted ; surrounded by the support of different relatives, his mind, as the reader well knows, was of that weak fluctuating kind which had no steady rule of action. Brownrigg was among those who sincerely rejoiced at his settlement, and wished him well from his heart, received him with particular kindness, and could not help glancing at his former attachment to Miss Louisa. Joe had an undefined idea of propriety in preserving silence on this subject, and Phillis seemed quite at a loss to understand Brownrigg's allusion ; she had an idea that he was a very merry gentle-

man, and mighty agreeable. She thought nothing farther on the subject, and indeed was so happy at the Brow, and had so many resources for filling up the short time that remained ; that no inquiry was made, and all went on smoothly and pleasantly.

Michael determined to go and attend the funeral of his early friend ; Esther was to accompany him, but could not leave her home ; while Joe and Phillis remained. Michael set out late on the Monday, and did not reach P— till Tuesday afternoon. The funeral took place on Wednesday morning, the church was crowded to excess. At first, the Walker family meant to attend, but they found their spirits unequal to this exertion ; so the only person present was Mr. Edmund, and his cousin Protheroe. But Mr. Lascelles arrived early on Wednesday morning : he was not equal to reading the prayers or performing the ceremony—he was a silent mournful spectator, lost in contemplation of that hour when himself should be called to give an account of his own important embassy. He viewed this in the most pleasing light ; he well knew that his Master was not a hard Master, gathering where he had not strewed, but one who was touched with the feeling of infirmity, and was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

After the mournful service, on his return to the Rectory he stayed a few days with the bereaved family, and proposed taking Matilda home with him. This dear young creature strolled silently about, comforting one and another, and performing all the little offices of friendship in that silent manner which is sure to win the heart, and the request was universal, that she might remain a short time with them. The father and the daughter were equally desirous of living under the influence of that fine code of laws which are found in the 12th of the Romans ; and, among the rest, of weeping with those that weep, and rejoicing with those that do rejoice. Poor Michael lingered, and longed to see his friends at the Rectory, yet did not dare propose it, so much did he dread distressing those who were already bowed down under the hand of affliction ; but he thought he would take a last look on the spot where the mortal remains were deposited before he returned home. It was on this mournful visit to the narrow house of his early friend, that he saw Mrs. Walker leaning on the arm of her daughter, and he said, “ She goeth unto the grave to weep there ; ” and he was about to withdraw in silence, when Mrs. Walker looked up and perceived him ; and with

that unutterable distress which levels all distinction, she offered him her hand ; he bowed his head, and withdrew.

Time soothed the sorrow for one of whom it might justly be written, “ Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours.” We might long dwell among scenes where faith and hope point to the land of blessedness ; we might long continue to mark the silent progress of humble piety, and the influence of holy lives on those among whom they were passed. But we must leave these friends, we must return to our own village, and endeavour to practise there what we have witnessed in other scenes. We must watch with Mrs. Walker over the rising young ones around, we must visit the abodes of sorrow and sickness, and in our own family circle so endeavour to set an example of Christian meekness and forbearance as may best adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. If we have commended the abiding truths of Christianity ; if we have exposed the fallacy of worldly dependance on happiness here ; if we have shown that no cup is presented to mortal taste but hath some mixture of bitterness, we have assuredly drawn a faithful picture of our state here. Should one heart be led

to contemplate its state by nature, one resolution be strengthened by what is here presented to the reader, the hope of the writer is gratified, and the desire accomplished.

THE END.

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